ABSTRACT

Title of thesis: INSPIRING A CHORAL REVOLUTION? THE POLYPHONIC MUSIC OF EDWARD IV'S BURGUNDIAN EXILE, 1470-1471

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In the second half of the fifteenth century, at least half a dozen prominent polyphonic choirs in England were transformed, both in terms of their numbers and their vocal range. The most prominent example was at St. George's Collegiate Church, Windsor, where under Edward IV the number of boy choristers and lay clerks doubled, and the boys were trained to sing polyphony for the first time. One possible contributory factor to this burst of choral development is the polyphonic music Edward is likely to have experienced during his exile in the Burgundian territories from 1470–1471. Edward's principal host while in exile was the nobleman Louis de Gruuthuse. While staying at Gruthuuse's Bruges palace, Edward would have been able to hear polyphonic music at the neighboring Church of Our Lady, in the Lady Mass, guild services and during the concert-like "lof," established in 1468. At around this time, Gruuthuse began constructing an upper-level oratory looking into Our Lady's Church, and Edward subsequently built a similar space at St. George's Windsor. These structures are part of a wider Anglo-Burgundian pattern of music patrons building raised oratories in the period 1450–1500. Oratories may have been built, in part, to improve the experience of listening to larger, louder choirs. Listening from the oratory would have both reduced the initial-time-delay gap and created an

unobstructed line of listening to the choirboys, allowing their higher frequencies to be heard more clearly.

Despite complex political circumstances, Edward did spend time at Charles the Bold's court. His visits followed a period in which Charles was especially concerned with expanding his choir. The duke's chapel ordinances of 1469 specify six upper voices for singing polyphony. This may have been part of a wider phenomenon in the Burgundian territories and later, in England, of groups of six choirboys being established in choirs where their role specifically included polyphony. The choir at St. Donatian's in Bruges had at least fifty years of history of boys and men singing polyphony together by 1470, and its recruitment and training allied to an attractive income and career prospects for its singers made this one of the finest choirs of its kind in Europe by the late fifteenth century. The years 1470–1471 would have been a peak in the choir's activity due to the unprecedented spending on copying of music by Gilles de Joye in the year's 1468–1471. The arrangements of St. Donatian's choir are a possible model for the changes Edward went on to make to his choir at Windsor.

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by

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
2021

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Barbara Haggh-Huglo, Professor Olga Haldey and Professor Patrick Warfield for forming my thesis committee, and for my wife and family for their support. I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Professor Haggh-Huglo, for her tireless and generous expert help with every part of this project.

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Chapter One
Edward IV as Music Patron, and the Circumstances of His Exile

Introduction

In the second half of the fifteenth century, several prominent polyphonic choirs in England were transformed, both in terms of their numbers and their vocal range. While in around 1450, polyphonic performance was the sole preserve of groups made up of between four and six professional adult singers or lay clerks, by the 1480s at least half a dozen important ensembles had been remodeled. The updated choirs included at least six boys' voices, and as many as twelve singing lay clerks. This study will offer one possible contributory factor to this burst in choral growth: the polyphonic music Edward IV experienced during his exile in the Burgundian territories from 1470–1471.[1]

The music Edward heard during his time abroad is a plausible catalyst for English choral developments for three reasons. First, because it immediately preceded a surge in the number of choral singers. Between 1472 and around 1490, the choirs at Westminster Abbey, Worcester Priory, Winchester Priory, Bristol Abbey and York Minster increased measurably in size.[2] Second, the most dramatic change of all took place at the instigation of Edward himself, as part of an overhaul of St. George's Collegiate Church, Windsor, which included building an entirely new chapel. Here, the total number of singers was increased from twenty-three in 1477 to forty-

[1] Burgundian territory at this time ranged from Amsterdam in the north to Dijon in the south, and included parts of modern France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany and Switzerland.

[2] Roger Bowers, "To Chorus from Quartet: The Performing Resource for English Church Polyphony, c. 1390–1559," in *English Choral Practice, 1400–1650*, ed. John Morehen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 31.

five in 1482.[3] And third, much of Edward's time in exile was spent either in Bruges or at the Burgundian court, which were both leading European centers of polyphonic music.

There is a rich body of scholarship exploring the impetus for changes to English polyphonic choirs during this period.[4] The existing explanations for these developments include the simplification of mensural notation over time enabling easier training of singers,[5] the rise in the status of the lay clerk,[6] and the recruitment of musicians whose specific role included the instruction of boy choristers in singing polyphony.[7] Changes to the repertoire of English choirs have also been studied, showing an increase in the standard number of voice parts being used by composers from three or four in c.1450, to five or more by c.1500, and the extension of the conventional vocal compass by almost an octave.[8] But to date, no study has explored the influence of the practices of leading Burgundian choirs of the time on English ensembles, or how Edward's knowledge and experience of them may have contributed to choral expansions.

There is also a significant literature on the influence of Burgundy on English life in the late-medieval period, in the areas of diplomacy, court administration, and book-collecting.[9] In

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[3] Roger Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel in the 15th Century," in *St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Colin Richmond and Eileen Scarff (Leeds: Maney, 2001), 199–201.

[4] In the work of Frank Llewellyn Harrison, Magnus Williamson, Roger Bowers, and others: Harrison, *Music in Medieval Britain*, 1959; Williamson, "Parish Music in Late-Medieval England: Local, Regional, National Identities," 2017; Bowers, "To Chorus from Quartet: The Performing Resource for English Church Polyphony, c.1390–1559," 1999.

[5] Bowers, "To Chorus from Quartet," 20.

[6] Ibid., 16.

[7] Ibid., 31.

[8] Ibid., 21.

[9] On diplomacy: M.H.A. Ballard, "Anglo-Burgundian Relations, 1464–1472" (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 1992); on court administration: A.R. Myers, *The Household of Edward IV: The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959); on book-collecting: Margaret Kekewich, "Edward IV, William Caxton, and Literary Patronage in

terms of music, however, England in the fifteenth century has traditionally been viewed, as James Cook puts it, as "both isolated and peripheral."[10] But Cook argues that this is a misreading induced by the fragmentary state of English sources. He points to the prevalence of English music in continental volumes, and suggests that this was likely a reciprocal relationship.[11] One of Cook's examples that relates to this study is the Lucca Choirbook, Lucca, Archivio di Stato, Ms. 238, which Reinhard Strohm argues was compiled in Bruges between 1467 and 1472,[12] most likely for the Merchant Adventurers, an English association of traders based in the city.[13] The manuscript is incomplete, but the fragments of seventeen masses, nine motets and two magnificats suggest that it contained a wide range of English music from c.1440 to 1470,[14] as well as music connected to Bruges by Du Fay and others.[15] A similar example is Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. 5557,[16] a choirbook that is thought to have been assembled in part for the wedding in 1468 of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, to Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV.[17] It

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Yorkist England," *The Modern Language Review* 66, no. 3 (1971): 481–7; and on Music: James Cook, *The Cyclic Mass: Anglo-Continental Exchange in the Fifteenth Century* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020).

[10] Cook, *The Cyclic Mass: Anglo-Continental Exchange in the Fifteenth Century,* 3.

[11] Ibid., 4–6.

[12] Reinhard Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 123.

[13] Cook, *The Cyclic Mass: Anglo-Continental Exchange in the Fifteenth Century*, 11, citing Reinhard Strohm, *The Lucca Choirbook: Lucca, Archivio di Stato, Ms 238; Lucca, Archivio Arcivescovile, Ms 97; Pisa, Archivio Arcivescovile, Biblioteca Maffi, cartella 11/III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 1–34.

[14] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 123.

[15] Ibid., 129. See also: Rob C. Wegman, ed., *Choirbook of the Burgundian Court Chapel: Brussel, Koninklijke Bibliotheek ms. 5557* (Peer: Musica Alamire, 1989).

[16] Cook, *The Cyclic Mass: Anglo-Continental Exchange in the Fifteenth Century*, 54–6, discusses this.

[17] Klaas Van der Heide, "New Claims for a Burgundian Origin of the L'homme Arme Tradition, and a Different View on the Relative Positions of the Earliest Masses in the

contains three masses by the Englishman, Walter Frye, alongside music by Du Fay, Busnois, Ockeghem, and others. Frye's music was prominent enough in the Burgundian territories that his motet *Ave regina caelorum* was depicted in the hands of the angels in *Coronation of the Virgin*, by Bruges painter The Master of the Legend of St. Lucy.[18] The painting is reproduced on the next page, with the angels holding sheet music to the left and right of the Virgin's head, in the upper center of the image (see Figure 2).

Tradition," *Tijdschrift van de Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 55, no. 1 (2005): 27.

[18] Reinhard Strohm, "Music, Ritual, and Painting in Fifteenth-Century Bruges," in *Hans Memling: Essays*, ed. Dirk de Vos (Ghent: Ludion, 1994), 38–9.

Figure 1: *Coronation of the Virgin*, The Master of the Legend of St. Lucy, Washington DC, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Open Access image.

This study builds on these arguments for a pattern of cultural exchange between England and Burgundian territory by exploring the polyphonic ensembles that Edward and his entourage – including his brother Richard, who would become Richard III – would have surely heard during their time in exile, with a particular focus on those at the Burgundian court, and the two Bruges churches with the most ambitious polyphonic music, Our Lady's Collegiate Church and St. Donatian's. I will then draw connections between the number of singers and performance practice of these ensembles and the reshaping of their English counterparts that followed.

The Circumstances of Edward's Burgundian Exile

Edward was crowned King of England in 1461 after a period of chaotic and bloody struggle. His coronation had to be postponed while he crushed a rebel army still loyal to the Lancastrian Henry VI.[19] The first period of Edward's reign, 1461–1470, was shaped by threats to his authority and to the safety of his kingdom. He was occupied by a campaign of resistance from those loyal to the House of Lancaster and the very real threat of an invasion from France.[20]

Charles Ross describes the years from 1469 to 1471, the final part of Edward's first reign, as "a period of political instability without parallel in English history since 1066."[21] Edward initially lost power to his former ally, the Earl of Warwick, for several months in 1469, before regaining control. Warwick rebelled again in the spring of 1470 but was repulsed and fled to northern France. From there, Warwick mounted an invasion of England in September of the same year. Edward appeared to be in a strong position to quash this new threat until a betrayal by John Neville, Marquess of Montagu, who had been assembling troops on his behalf, prompted

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[19] Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 66–70.

[20] Ibid., 77–80.

[21] Ibid., 174.

the king to flee on October 2, 1470, for the Low Countries.[22] In Edward's absence, Henry VI was soon restored to the English throne.

While Edward, Richard and their courtiers were no doubt resilient, hardened by years of civil war, the personal trauma of this situation must be acknowledged. The king, in particular, was not only fleeing his country and his throne, but also his heavily pregnant wife. Elizabeth Woodville sought sanctuary at Westminster Abbey, where she gave birth to a son (who would become Edward V) on November 2, one month after King Edward had fled the country.[23]

After a dangerous journey, during which Edward and his supporters were almost captured by Hanseatic ships, the deposed king landed near Alkmaar.[24] Here he appears to have had a stroke of luck: this part of the coast fell under the control of the governor of Holland, Louis de Gruuthuse. A trusted lieutenant of the Duke of Burgundy Charles the Bold, Gruuthuse had previously made Edward's acquaintance, and was now charged with hosting the king.[25] Gruuthuse ensured that Edward and his entourage received safe passage to The Hague, and then continued to be the king's principal host during his exile, including the time he spent at Gruuthuse's townhouse in Bruges and nearby castle at Oostcamp.[26] This was propitious in terms of the king's safety, as the escape from England had been so hasty that Edward and his party were vulnerable; without money, the king is said to have given a fur gown to compensate the

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[22] Ross, *Edward IV*, 197.

[23] Ibid., 385.

[24] Ibid., 197–8.

[25] Ibid., 198.

[26] Malcolm Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman and Art Patron: Louis de Bruges, Lord of la Gruthuyse and Earl of Winchester," in *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1995), 118. According to Vale (p. 122), the most concentrated time Edward spent in Bruges was from January 13 to February 19, 1471.

master of the ship that had delivered them.[27] But Gruuthuse would also prove to have a significant influence on Edward's intellectual development,[28] and his Bruges palace was physically connected to Our Lady's Collegiate Church, which had one of the most lavish musical programs in the city.[29]

Music and Liturgy in Edward's Life

There are sources from before, during and after Edward's exile that suggest the importance to the king of public ritual and liturgical music. Edward's personal patronage of religion is described as "sparse" by Ross,[30] but even in the fractious years of his early reign, the king still found the resources necessary to produce lavish ceremonies with extravagant musical provision. One such example is the churching of his wife Elizabeth in 1466, [31] which featured a choir of forty-two, plus strings, trumpets and pipes.[32]

While there are no accounts of Edward attending sung mass during his exile, he did have pre-existing connections to at least two Bruges churches, one of which links him to its polyphonic music. The first was to the private chapel of the aforementioned Merchant Adventurers, to which Edward had given an endowment in 1462.[33] The Bruges branch of the Merchant Adventurers, whose number included William Caxton, had their chapel within the

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[27] Charles Ross, *Richard III* (New Haven: Yale University Press 2011), 19.

[28] Ross, *Edward IV*, 321.

[29] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 42–3.

[30] Ross, *Edward IV*, 333.

[31] This was a service of thanksgiving after a woman had given birth.

[32] Malcolm Letts, ed. and trans., *The Travels of Leo of Rozmital* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1957), 46–7.

[33] Maximiliaan P. J. Martens, "Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482" (PhD diss., University of California Santa Barbara, 1992), 324.

Carmelite convent, and Edward's 1462 privilege granted them permission to spend funds collected from forfeitures and confiscations on the maintenance of their chapel.[34] The merchants' costs included paying for the singing of the Carmelite Friars, who performed polyphonic music in their chapel by at least 1456. The second was to the Church of Our Lady, which was adjacent to the Gruuthuse Palace where Edward stayed. Here, the king's coat of arms was displayed after a full set had been commissioned, one for each of the Knights of the Order of the Golden Fleece,[35] following the Order's meeting held there in 1468.[36]

Two public events with processions, an apparition and a mass, are described in *Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV*, the anonymous Yorkist account of the king's triumphant campaign to reclaim the English crown in 1471, immediately after his exile. The first relates a minor miracle that occurred at a church in Daventry, where a concealed image of St. Anne apparently opened, untouched, in the king's presence. In recounting this, the chronicler describes how Edward,

> "with great devotion, heard all divine service upon the morning, Palm Sunday, in the parish church… the King went in procession… and, when the procession had come into the church… drawn up before the cross, that all the people shall honor the cross, with the anthem, *Ave*, three times undertaken."[37]

In a similar vein, the chronicle relates how at the conclusion of the 1471 campaign, Edward's conclusive victory at the Battle of Tewkesbury was marked by a dramatic liturgy in the town's Abbey church:

> "… with God's might achieved, the King took the right way to the abbey there, to give unto Almighty God laud and thanks for the victory… where he was received with

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[34] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 63–4.

[35] A Burgundian chivalric order founded by Duke Philip the Good.

[36] Martens, "Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482," 214.

[37] John Bruce, ed., *Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV in England and the Finall Recouerye of His Kingdomes from Henry VI A.D. M.CCCC.–LXXI* (London: Camden Society, 1838), 13. Text modernized by Patrick Allies.

> procession, and so conveyed through the church, and the quire, to the high altar, with great devotion praising God…"[38]

We also know that music played a role in perhaps the most dramatic public liturgy of Edward's reign. In 1476, in an act of dynastic piety, Edward decided to exhume the bodies of his father and younger brother, which lay in modest graves close to where they had perished at the Battle of Wakefield and re-inter them in a family vault at Fotheringhay Collegiate Church. An eyewitness account provides a description of the extravagant ceremony, and also gives an indication of the way in which Edward chose to observe sung mass:

> "The procession moved into the church where two hearses were waiting, one in the choir for the body of the Duke and one in the Lady Chapel[39] for that of the Earl of Rutland, and after the King had retired to his 'closet' [a small private or semi-private space for prayer] and the princes and officers of arms had stationed themselves around the hearses, masses were sung... The next day three masses were sung, the Bishop of Lincoln preached a 'very noble sermon' and offerings were made..."[40]

This mention of Edward retiring to his closet before the masses were sung corresponds with another piece of information which suggests that Edward at times desired to hear mass in a discreet way. In 1479 the king received a license from Pope Sixtus IV that allowed him and his queen to attend services at Sheen Priory in a chapel that was separate from the monastic choir.[41] There is a likely connection here with the issues of privacy which emerge in Edward IV's Black Book of the Household and other ordinances. Here there is a new focus, in terms of royal

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[38] Bruce, *Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV,* 30. Text modernized by Patrick Allies.

[39] A chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

[40] Cora L. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth* (London: Longman, Green and Co., 1923), 2:166.

[41] Ross, *Edward IV*, 333.

household policy, on a series of smaller rooms that protected the king's personal space.[42] This idea of Edward choosing to worship – and, arguably, to listen – in this private, distanced way, is one I will return to in Chapter Three.

Finally, the description of liturgical music in Edward's life that is of most significance is one which provides a connection to both the king's exile and his relationship with Louis de Gruuthuse, his host. In a show of gratitude for Gruthuuse's hospitality, in September of 1472 Edward bestowed on Gruuthuse the unusual honor, for a non-Englishman, the title of earl of Winchester.[43] A herald recorded Gruuthuse's trip to England to receive it and gives details of an elaborate ceremony at Westminster Abbey. But the account also notes that the king and Gruuthuse, while staying at Windsor, went to hear Lady mass,[44] which was "melodiously sung" in the King's own chapel.[45] The musical aspects of the relationship between Edward and Gruuthuse are further explored in Chapter Two.

It is intriguing that Windsor should be the location for Gruuthuse to hear Lady mass with Edward, because this was the site of the dramatic project that the king would begin almost immediately afterwards that would involve the construction of a new church and the establishment of an enlarged choir, mentioned earlier, to sing there. In February 1473, Edward

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[42] Fiona Kisby, "The Early-Tudor Royal Household Chapel, 1485–1547" (PhD Diss., University of London, 1996), 37.

[43] Frederic Madden, "Narratives of the Arrival of Louis De Bruges, Seigneur De La Gruthuyse, in England, and of his Creation as Earl of Winchester, in 1472: Communicated in a Letter from Sir Frederic Madden to Hudson Gurney, Esq. Vice-President," *Archaeologia* 26 (1836): 265–86.

[44] A votive mass in honor of the Virgin Mary, with its own liturgy. During the period in question, it would often have included a sung polyphonic mass ordinary. See: Barbara Haggh, "Votive ritual," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed April 19, 2021, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.

[45] C. Lethbridge Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 386–8.

appointed the Bishop of Salisbury, Richard Beauchamp, as "master and surveyor of the King's works" at St. George's Chapel.[46] Beauchamp was given free rein to demolish the earlier buildings on the site, including the removal of the earlier chapel, so that a substantial replacement could be constructed. In the same period, Edward gradually increased the number of choristers and lay clerks, siphoning money from St. Anthony's Hospital in London in order to pay for this.[47]

Inspirations for Edward's New Choir at Windsor

There are possible explanations as to why the king would have matched the new church with a striking increase in the number of singers. The construction project was clearly of importance to Edward as the church would be the home of the Order of the Garter, his chivalric order, and therefore a site of great prestige. And while the building would not be completed within Edward's lifetime, he saw it as his planned final resting place, insisting that a chantry chapel, a small chapel set aside for specific chantry duties which commonly included mass or prayers for a deceased person or persons, be included that would house his own tomb.[48] In light of this, it is perhaps not surprising that the king installed a new, vastly enlarged choir to sing in the chapel.[49]

Edward's decision to employ this new, larger choral ensemble can also be described as an example of what Vincenzo Borghetti and others have called the "representation of princely

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[46] Tim Tatton-Brown, "The Constructional Sequence and Topography of St. George's Chapel Windsor," in *St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Colin Richmond and Eileen Scarff (Leeds: Maney, 2001), 5–6.

[47] Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 199–201.

[48] Tatton-Brown, "The Constructional Sequence and Topography," 9.

[49] Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 191.

power."[50] Borghetti argues that over the course of the fifteenth century, European court chapels—the clergy and singers responsible for performing liturgical services at court—became centered on music: in his words, "polyphonic music… became a luxury good, a display object."[51] This may well have been the case at Windsor, where perhaps Edward saw an opportunity to project impressive grandeur in a way that Henry VI had failed to do.[52] Certainly, we know that English musicians were already highly regarded by his fellow princes across Europe: Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza wrote to Edward in October 1471, informing him that he had dispatched two choir recruiters to England in order to find new members for his own chapel choir.[53]

It is also important to acknowledge that in the second period of his reign, the economic situation allowed Edward to make these reforms. As Ross puts it, "after 1471, and still more after 1475, security at home, increased leisure, and above all the possession of ample funds, enabled Edward to indulge his leanings towards magnificence on a far greater scale than before."[54] This was significant, as due to the preceding recession, St. George's Windsor was suffering financially. Edward was able to give the college what A.K.B. Evans describes as "[an] endowment so massive that it could surmount the difficulties of reduced rents and long-standing arrears."[55]

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[50] Vincenzo Borghetti, "Music and the Representation of Princely Power in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century," *Acta Musicologica* 80, no. 2 (2008): 179–214.

[51] Borghetti, "Music and the Representation of Princely Power," 193–4.

[52] Myers, *The Household of Edward IV*, 5.

[53] Evelyn S. Welch, "Sight, Sound and Ceremony in the Chapel of Galeazzo Maria Sforza," *Early Music History* 12 (1993): 166.

[54] Ross, *Edward IV*, 330.

[55] A.K.B. Evans, "The Years of Arrears: Financial Problems of the College of St. George in the Fifteenth Century," in *St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Colin Richmond and Eileen Scarff (Leeds: Maney, 2001), 104.

Despite these possible explanations for Edward's newly enlarged ensemble, the impetus for this decision and for the precise details of the way in which it was carried out have not fully been investigated. Therefore, an examination of Edward's time abroad may be useful. I will not seek to prove linear causality between Edward's experiences during his Burgundian exile and what came next in terms of his musical patronage. Instead, I want to examine the likely encounters of this time abroad to help explain why, given almost limitless possibilities, the king chose to go about these musical reforms in the manner that he did.

The musical possibilities of Edward's time in exile have been overlooked,[56] yet given the importance of music and liturgy in Edward's life, and the reforms of English choirs that subsequently took place, it seems appropriate to consider what Edward may have experienced while abroad. Most of all it is the high status of the liturgical music of Bruges and Burgundy in this period, and the ubiquity of polyphonic performance, that makes this period worth studying. In Strohm's estimation, "the performances of mensural polyphony in the churches of late fifteenth-century Bruges must have averaged three to four per day."[57] In this study I will examine what Edward may have heard of these performances, how he listened to them, and suggest the possible impact of this on English musical culture in the late fifteenth century.

[56] I have not found any references to the possible significance of music during Edward's exile.

[57] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 11.

Figure 2: Map of The Burgundian Territories Under Charles the Bold, 1465/67–1477

Image used under a Creative Commons License (Credit: Marco Zanoli)

Chapter Two
Louis de Gruuthuse: Royal Host and Music Patron

Introduction

The influence of the Burgundian nobleman, Louis de Gruuthuse, on Edward IV's development as an intellectual and as a cultural patron has long been recognized. Particular attention has been given to Gruuthuse's contribution to the king's development in the areas of book-collecting, architecture and diplomacy.[1] The account of the king and Gruuthuse attending Lady mass in the King's own chapel at Windsor, "melodiously sung," hints that their musical relationship should also be considered, however.[2] We know that Gruuthuse had musical and liturgical interests: he was a patron of the music at Our Lady's Collegiate Church in Bruges, which neighbored his palace; he built an oratory[3] overlooking the choir of same church, which is still intact, and which he used to attend sung masses; and he was a member of confraternities[4] that sponsored polyphonic performances. I will outline Gruuthuse's role as royal host, detail his musical involvement in Bruges, and make connections with Edward's patronage of polyphonic music. I will examine both the music to which the king and the Burgundian nobleman gave financial support, and the way in which they listened to it.

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[1] The most substantial work on Gruuthuse to date is Maximiliaan P. J. Martens, ed., *Lodewijk van Gruuthuse, Maecenas en Europees diplomaat*, (Bruges: Stichting Kunstboek, 1992). Studies in English that refer to Gruuthuse's influence on Edward include: Malcolm Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman and Art Patron: Louis de Bruges, Lord of la Gruthuyse and Earl of Winchester," in *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1995) on architecture, M.H.A. Ballard, "Anglo-Burgundian Relations, 1464–1472" (PhD diss., Oxford University, 1992) on diplomacy, and Margaret Kekewich, "Edward IV, William Caxton, and Literary Patronage in Yorkist England," *The Modern Language Review* 66, no. 3 (1971): 481–7 on book-collecting.

[2] Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century*, 386–8.

[3] A private chapel.

[4] Confraternities were lay brotherhoods, usually with a religious purpose.

Edward's Arrival into Gruuthuse's Hospitality

Gruuthuse, while a noted bibliophile and a music patron, was first and foremost an experienced and powerful courtier. Having served Duke Philip the Good successfully in his war with Ghent in the 1450s,[5] Gruuthuse became part of the duke's inner circle, and was made a knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1461.[6] Gruuthuse also became an advisor to Philip's son and heir Charles (who became Duke Charles the Bold), which gave him a connection to the House of York via Charles' wife Margaret, sister of Edward IV.[7] Gruuthuse may also have been known to the Yorkists due to his trips to England on behalf of Philip in 1461 and 1466.[8] By the time of Edward's exile, Gruuthuse was serving as Governor of Holland, a demanding post[9] which signified his political status.[10] The nobleman was in his early forties, wealthy, and important.

Edward landed at Texel near Alkmaar in October 1470 where he was met by Gruuthuse.[11] Malcolm Vale points out that the location of Edward's landing was fortuitous, rather than by design,[12] but the outcome was that Gruuthuse hosted the king for more of his exile than anyone else.[13] While Edward was now in the territory of his brother-in-law Duke Charles the Bold, the duke was in a difficult position as Edward was no longer king, and any sign of

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[5] Rebecca Dixon, "Enigma as Display in the Fifteenth-Century Chastellain De Coucy: Veiled Performances," *Speculum* 88, no. 1 (2013): 216.

[6] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman and Art Patron," 118.

[7] Ross, *Edward IV*, 198–9.

[8] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman and Art Patron," 118.

[9] Ibid., 118.

[10] Wim De Clercq, Jan Dumolyn, and Jelle Haemers, "Vivre Noblement": Material Culture and Elite Identity in Late Medieval Flanders," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 38, no. 1 (2007): 26.

[11] Ross, *Edward IV*, 198–9.

[12] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman and Art Patron," 118.

[13] Ibid., 119.

support for Edward could be interpreted as an act of war.[14] In due course, Edward did spend some time at the Duke's court, and this will be addressed later. But from his October arrival until Christmas, and for some of January and February, the deposed monarch was dependent on Gruuthuse's hospitality, and a considerable amount of this time was spent at the nobleman's palace in Bruges.[15]

Edward's gratitude for the welcome he received in Bruges is shown by his subsequent appointment of Gruuthuse as earl of Winchester in October 1472, and also in the warmth of the letter the king sent to the citizens of Bruges in May 1471, after he had retaken the English throne: "Tres chiers et espéciauls amys, nous vous merchions tant et si cordiallement que faire povons de la bonne chier et grande courtoises…" (Very dear and special friends, we thank you so much and so cordially for what what you have done in the way of good deeds and great courtesy…).[16]

Gruuthuse as Literary and Musical Book Collector

In the 1470s, the Gruuthuse residence in Bruges was a substantial and impressive residence.[17] One of its most remarkable elements would have been the section of Louis de Gruuthuse's personal library that was held there.[18] Ross describes the library as one of the finest in Europe,[19]

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[14] Ross, *Edward IV*, 203–4.

[15] Martens (*Lodewijk van Gruuthuse,* 25) gives the dates of Edward's stay in Bruges as January 13 to February 19. As Charles the Bold's itinerary records that the king could be found at Hesdin Castle until the end of January, it seems his location was not fixed.

[16] Louis Gilliodts-Van Severen, *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, VI (Bruges: Gaillard, 1876), 62. Translation by Patrick Allies.

[17] De Clercq, Dumolyn, and Haemers call it "pompous."

[18] Items were also stored at the Hague and Oostkamp, according to Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman," 118.

[19] Ross, *Edward IV*, 320–21.

while Jongenelen and Parsons refer to Gruuthuse as "one of the most remarkable book-collectors of the Middle Ages."[20] Gruuthuse's collection signified his great wealth as well as his bibliophilia. At this time, the cost of a single book was equivalent to that of a townhouse, so Gruuthuse's collection of 160 manuscripts was worth as much as an entire village.[21]

Music manuscripts were featured in Gruuthuse's collection. The most significant musical item was the *Gruuthuse Songbook*,[22] which consisted of three different booklets from the late fourteenth century that had been combined into one book in around 1462.[23] The volume is largely devoted to poetry – it is significant, because it holds the earliest Dutch poems to have musical notation provided.[24] In an additional demonstration of his interest in music, Gruuthuse also owned the complete motets of Guillaume de Machaut, which filled five-hundred pages.[25]

There does seem to be a relationship between Gruuthuse's bibliophilia and Edward's subsequent acquisition of manuscripts. As Ross describes, "Edward began the systematic purchasing of expensive Flemish illuminated manuscripts soon after his return to England in 1471."[26] Certainly, by his death in 1483, Edward owned similar versions of almost half of the

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[20] Bas Jongenelen and Ben Parsons, "Ten Poems from the "Gruuthuse Songbook" (c.1462)," *Fifteenth Century Studies* 34 (2009): 93.

[21] Jongenelen and Parsons, "Ten Poems," 94, quoting Jozef Janssens, "Inleiding," in *"Egidius waer bestu bleven": Liederen uit het GruuthuseManuscript*, eds. Jozef Janssens, V. Uyttersprot, and L. Dewachter (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 1992), 10.

[22] Herman Brinkman and Ike de Loos, eds., *Het Gruuthuse-handschrift (Hs. Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 79 K 10)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2015).

[23] Ibid., 94.

[24] Ibid., 95.

[25] Ibid., 96. On the contents of the library, the authors cite Jan Deschamps and Joris Reynaert, "Gruuthuse-Handschrift," in *De Nederlandse en Vlaamse auteurs van middeleeuwen tot hedem met inbegrif van de Friese auteurs*, ed. Gerrit Jan van Bork and P. J. Verkruijsse (Weesp: De Haan, 1985), 237–8.

[26] Ross, *Edward IV*, 321.

volumes that were in Gruuthuse's library.[27] There is also at least one example of a book in the king's collection that bore the Gruuthuse heraldic emblem and motto, which Kekewich suggests was a gift from the Burgundian nobleman to Edward.[28] Vale acknowledges the doubt Scot Mackendrick has cast over one of the books previously thought to have shown a link between Edward and Gruuthuse's collections, but still concludes that there was a direct connection between the Burgundian's commissioning and purchasing of manuscripts and the king's own library.[29]

The Gruuthuse Oratory

The influence of Gruuthuse on Edward can also be observed in their respective architectural projects. As early as 1468,[30] Gruuthuse began building an annex that connected his residence to the neighboring Collegiate Church of Our Lady.[31] His access to the church came in the form of a small wood-paneled oratory, looking out into the southeast corner of the ambulatory (see Figures 4 and 5). Gruuthuse received permission from the chapter early in 1472 to build the lower part of the oratory in stone, perhaps replacing a slightly older wooden structure.[32] The letter establishing permission for the oratory makes references to the gifts Gruuthuse had already bestowed on the

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[27] Kekewich, "Edward IV, William Caxton," 482.

[28] Ibid., 482–3.

[29] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman," 119–21.

[30] Jan Dumolyn, Marc Ryckaert, Heidi Deneweth, Luc Devliegher, and Guy Dupont, "The Urban Landscape II: c.1275–c.1500," in *Medieval Bruges: c. 850–1550*, eds. Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 184, citing L. Devliegher, "De bidkapel van Gruuthuse te Brugge," *Gentse Bijdragen tot de Kunstgeschiedenis en Oudheidkunde*, 17 (1957–8): 69–74.

[31] Jeanne Nuechterlein, "The Domesticity of Sacred Space in the Fifteenth-Century Netherlands," in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton (Aldershot–Burlington: Ashgate, 2005).

[32] Nuechterlein, "The Domesticity of Sacred Space," 69.

Church of Our Lady. Among these, one could conceivably refer to music-making: a gift of two richly decorated "choir batons" (choorstaven), inscribed with the Gruuthuse coat of arms.[33] These could perhaps be choirbook pointers of the sort seen in some depictions from this period, such as the woodcut from Gregor Reisch's *Margarita Philosophica* (see Figure 3). Here, the third figure from the right holds a choirbook pointer in their left hand.

Figure 3: Woodcut from Gregor Reisch's "Margarita philosophica" (1503).
Image reproduced from the Bavarian State Library under a Creative Commons License.

[33] Martens, "Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482," 530.

Jeanne Nuechterlein has argued that Gruuthuse's oratory is part of a tradition of wealthy patrons seeking private access to worship that extends back at least as far as Charlemagne's ninth-century Palatine chapel at Aachen. According to Nuechterlein, these chapels provided "an immediate link between the secular home and sacred realm… [they] gave the household family a private place to worship, but they also typically foregrounded their social superiority."[34] The inference here is that the value in the oratory was that it enabled the Gruuthuse family and their guests to be present and acknowledged but not in view of ordinary worshippers. Vale notes that there was also a precedent for connecting the home to a sacred space in the Bruges church of St. Donatian's, which was connected via a *transitus*[35] to the comital house of the Counts of Flanders.[36] This had an unfortunate local association, however, as it had been the scene of Charles the Good's murder in 1127, in his own oratory.

The Gruuthuse oratory suggests that the nobleman cared about the way he experienced liturgy, to the extent that he was prepared to take on this major building project. Nuechterlein argues that the design of the chapel allowed Gruuthuse and his family to observe what was happening at the high altar, a privilege normally denied to the laity.[37] This may well have been a key motivation, but it is also worth considering what the Gruuthuse family would have been able to hear from their private space. As Malcolm Vale puts it: "the excellent musical resources of Our Lady at Bruges, patronised by the Gruuthuse family, could be appreciated from this vantage point."[38]

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[34] Nuechterlein, "The Domesticity of Sacred Space," 69.

[35] A passageway.

[36] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman," 122.

[37] Nuechterlein, "The Domesticity of Sacred Space," 69–70.

[38] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman," 122.

Of course, there is no evidence that Edward experienced the full effect of the Gruuthuse oratory – he had reclaimed the English throne by the time it was completed in stone. But the letter establishing permission for the oratory, dating from January 7, 1472, mentions that it is already under construction, so one might assume that the plans for the structure existed by the time of Edward's departure in March 1471, and could at least have been a topic for discussion.[39] Certainly, by the time of Gruuthuse's trip to Windsor in 1472, the building of his oratory would have been well underway. And at Windsor, Edward created a similar space in the new chapel he built at St. George's, where work began in 1473. In the new church at Windsor, the king insisted a "chapell or a closet" be constructed, also in a raised position and in the north-east area of the church (see Figure 6).[40] According to Vale it is too simplistic to argue that Edward's oratory is a "direct product" of his stay in Bruges, but asks if Edward had not visited Gruuthuse, would the structure "have taken the form that it did?"[41] More recently, Jan Dumolyn has used bolder language, describing Edward IV's chapel as a "copy."[42]

Music Patronage at The Collegiate Church of Our Lady

As Edward's stay in Bruges was spent adjacent to the Church of Our Lady, this seems an obvious place to consider first as a possible musical influence. This was one of the city's two major churches, and by the 1470s it had a rich schedule of sung liturgies that regularly included polyphony. In the fifteenth century, the Church of Our Lady had acquired an impressive

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[39] Martens, "Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482," 528.

[40] Tatton-Brown, "The Constructional Sequence and Topography of St. George's Chapel Windsor," 7–9.

[41] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman," 125–6 and 118.

[42] Dumolyn et al, "The Urban Landscape II: c.1275–c.1500," 184.

collection of music books, and employed a large staff including at least fourteen *clerici installati* or lay clerks. From 1429, one of their responsibilities would have been a sung Lady mass every Saturday, for which the original financial support came from Louis de Gruuthuse's parents. The *clerici installati* were also joined on occasion by a substantial number of schoolboys.[43] Their presence was often required at services for which there was a particular endowment.[44] One example of this, paid for by Louis de Gruuthuse and his wife Anne van Borssele, dates from February 1473.[45] This provided for four annual Requiems and vigils with nine lessons each, with four boys required to sing the masses, and eighteen boys to sing the lessons.

The Music Patronage of Confraternities

Confraternities were a major part of the liturgical scene in Bruges in the 1470s, and their endowments often provide evidence for the singing of polyphonic music. At the Church of Our Lady there was a significant increase of these arrangements in the second half of the fifteenth century.[46] For example, in the early 1470s, the Colaerd brothers and Peter de La Bie, all members of a wealthy money-lending family, funded motets and vespers[47] processions for three saints' days, and in 1474 this arrangement was formalized as the centerpiece of a new confraternity.

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[43] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 43. Strohm notes that there was no distinction made here between schoolboys and choirboys until c.1480.

[44] A perpetual income set aside for a specific purpose at a church; established by an individual or a confraternity.

[45] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 45.

[46] Ibid., 46–7.

[47] An early evening worship service of the office.

Gruuthuse was a member of the confraternity dedicated to Our Lady of the Dry Tree.[48] This was an exclusive confraternity, but one whose membership included numerous foreign dignitaries and merchants, as well ducal singers such as Adrien Basin and Jean Cordier.[49] The confraternity's name relates to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, and the organization offered its wealthy members opportunities to demonstrate their devotion.[50] Its services were hosted by the Friars Minor in their chapel close to the center of Bruges. The musical life of the Dry Tree confraternity was rich: their contract with the friary required a sung mass on Sundays and Marian feasts.[51] These services were not open to the public, but the confraternity did allow both male and female members to attend together until 1508.[52] While in the early years of the confraternity, the masses were sung by the friars, it soon began a policy of hiring outside singers.[53] In 1449 there was a tense episode where a group of twelve or thirteen skilled singers defected from their duties at St. Donatian's church in order to sing for the more lucrative Dry Tree mass and were subsequently punished. Although accounts do not survive from before 1496, we do know that by then the confraternity was spending the substantial annual sum of £78 on its singers and organists.[54]

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[48] Jongenelen and Parsons, "Ten Poems," 96.

[49] Andrew Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion in Medieval Bruges c.1300–1520* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 156 and Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 70–2.

[50] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 71.

[51] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 158.

[52] Ibid., 302.

[53] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 71.

[54] Ibid., 71–2.

Chief among the Bruges confraternities from a musical point of view was one dedicated to "Our Lady of the Snow."[55] This fraternity had a large membership which peaked at around 1,300 in the 1470s. Its number included those from the very top of society: Charles the Bold joined in 1469, soon followed by a number of his courtiers, including Louis de Gruuthuse.[56] In 1470 the duke's devotion to the confraternity was noted by the provost, the officer responsible for property owned by the church, and in January 1471 the duke made an offering at mass in front of the confraternity's altar.[57] On Sunday April 5, 1472 we know that he was present for one of its masses at the Church of Our Lady.[58] Intriguingly, we know that the duke did not attend at the Our Lady of Snow altar, but witnessed proceedings from the Gruuthuse oratory above. It may not be a coincidence that it was the north-east corner of the church, where the oratory was located, that was chosen as the location for the confraternity's new, enlarged chapel, that was being planned by March 1473.[59]

Edward would not have been present for the confraternity of Our Lady of Snow's feast day on August 5. But he would have been able to witness an important new musical tradition which had only begun in 1468.[60] This was a *lof* or *Salve*,[61] in effect by this time a devotional concert, which was to be sung by the succentor[62] and the boys after vespers on all Sundays and

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[55] Ibid., 47.

[56] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 160.

[57] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 250.

[58] Andrew Brown, "Bruges and the Burgundian 'Theatre-State': Charles the Bold and Our Lady of the Snow," *History* 84, no. 276 (1999): 574.

[59] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 159.

[60] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 48.

[61] *Lof* is the Dutch word for praise. The *Salve* is so-called because the service includes the singing of the antiphon for the Virgin Mary, *Salve regina*.

[62] The person responsible for overseeing the work of the lay clerks and, where applicable, the boy choristers.

Marian feasts, with organ.[63] On these occasions, the succentor usually hired two or three extra singers from the *socii de musica* of St. Donatian's Church.[64] For these performances, the performers would have been able to draw on the confraternity's growing library of polyphonic music. Strohm estimates that in the 1470s they were investing £40 in this collection per year.[65]

Conclusion

While we cannot be sure of exactly what Edward would have experienced by way of liturgy and music as Louis de Gruuthuse's guest in Bruges, we can account for many of the possibilities. It would have been difficult for him to avoid hearing Lady mass sung by the lay clerks of the Church of Our Lady, and it would certainly explain why Edward took Gruuthuse to hear Lady mass at Windsor in 1472. As Edward's time in Bruges coincided with a high point for the confraternity of Our Lady of Snows in terms of its social importance and musical spending, it seems almost inevitable that Edward would have sampled its new concert-like events, with music performed by the confraternity's singers. In a sense, Edward would have felt most at ease with the Dry Tree confraternity, whose international membership included the Englishman William Bray.[66]

Of course, it is possible that Gruuthuse learned as much about musical matters from Edward as the Englishman did from his host. But the range of new experiences Edward would

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[63] According to Reinhard Strohm, *The Rise of European Music, 1380–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 307, this practice led to public concerts in Bruges involving the civic wind band from 1483. These were offered in praise of Our Lady, but not part of a service.

[64] Details of this liturgy are given and discussed in Robert Nosow, *Ritual Meanings in the Fifteenth-Century Motet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 128-34.

[65] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 48.

[66] Ibid., 72.

have had must have made some impression. Even if Edward only took in some liturgical and para-liturgical events during his time with Gruuthuse, he would have encountered a rich array of polyphonic music performed by professional singers.

By February of 1471, the English king clearly felt comfortable enough in Bruges to walk through the city, rather than ride on horseback. A contemporary chronicle relates how the citizens, full of wonder and delight, joined the king as he walked to the Spey gate to board a boat.[67] So, perhaps he would also have been prepared to attend public worship or devotional concerts. On the other hand, by the time of Edward's visit, his host Louis de Gruuthuse was on the verge of building an entirely private space in which to worship, watch and listen. Perhaps this was, to some extent, a new idea to Edward. It may even have appealed to him as a new way for him to demonstrate power or even to improve his personal security, once he had reclaimed his throne.

The musical elements of the relationship between Edward and Gruuthuse are difficult to disentangle from those involving book-collecting, architecture, and diplomacy. If Edward encountered and was influenced by Gruuthuse's book collection, it is entirely possible that he was aware of its significant polyphonic musical items. And if Edward and Gruuthuse shared with each other their architectural plans for upper-level oratories, then one factor may well have been the polyphonic masses they planned to observe from these positions. Gruuthuse's 1472 trip to England involved hearing a melodious Lady mass, but it also allowed Edward to build on his relationship with one of Charles the Bold's senior courtiers who would go on to support English interests in future,[68] thereby combining liturgical music with international diplomacy.

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[67] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 232.

[68] Vale, "An Anglo-Burgundian Nobleman," 128.

Figure 4: Gruuthuse Oratory exterior, Our Lady's Collegiate Church, Bruges

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Figure 5: Gruuthuse Oratory interior, Our Lady's Collegiate Church, Bruges

© Musea Brugge (used with permission)

Figure 6: Edward IV Chantry (the left of the two windows that overlook the main chapel), St. George's Collegiate Church, Windsor

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Chapter Three
Late-Medieval Listening from the Oratory

There was a synchrony between Louis de Gruuthuse and Edward IV's upper-level oratories and musical developments in the spaces which they overlooked. Gruuthuse's oratory at Our Lady's Collegiate Church was built within four years of the establishing of polyphonic singing for the "lof" and at confraternity masses, while Edward's equivalent structure at Windsor was assembled at the same time as his choir significantly increased in size. I suggest these are just two of the multiple examples in England and Burgundian territory in the late-medieval period, where similar spaces were constructed by patrons with links to music. While acknowledging the other benefits of oratories built in wood or stone such as prestige, privacy, sightlines to altars, and visual aesthetics, I will make the case for possible musical and acoustical motivations for their construction.

Burgundian Music Patrons and Their Oratories

The importance of the way senior figures in Burgundy attended mass is shown by the special permission granted to the dukes of Burgundy in 1468 (held until 1491) relating to the masses of the Order of the Golden Fleece. This allowed the dukes to attend the order's Marian Mass and Mass of the Holy Ghost in an oratory next to the altar.[1] This arrangement is depicted in an image from a Book of Hours, reproduced in Figure 7, which shows Philip the Good at prayer, wearing the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece.[2] The duke is positioned under a cloth canopy, on the floor level of a church or chapel.

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[1] Barbara Haggh, "The Archives of the Order of the Golden Fleece and Music," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 120, no. 1 (1995): 9.

[2] Haggh, "The Archives of the Order," 9, writes that as Philip wears a collar of the Order and is in his private oratory, he must be at a Marian Mass or a Mass of the Holy Ghost at a

Figure 7: Philip the Good at Prayer, attrib. Jean Le Tavernier, in *Le Traité sur l'Oraison Dominicale*, after 1457, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9092, fol. 9r.

[REDACTED IMAGE]

The liturgical "moment" that is depicted, possibly the elevation of the bread and wine, is quite similar to that in the image referred to and reproduced in Chapter 4 from *La Fleur des Histoires*, in that the clergy are facing the altar, and the choir appear to be singing. In the illustration above, a steward is pulling back the covering of the canopy, while in the miniature from the *La Fleur des Histoires*, the curtain is tied back. Both arrangements would seem to increase the audibility

meeting of the Order of the Golden Fleece. She now explains that this was a court mass, because no bishop was celebrating, and that Philip would have worn his collar of the Order at any formal mass.

of the singing group – although they could also be choices made by the artist to provide a suitable composition.

A second practice, which is the focus of this chapter, involved the duke observing mass from the vantage point of a room that overlooked the chapel. This would have been an oratory in the sense of a small chapel, like those built by Edward and Gruuthuse. There was an example of this type of construction within the Burgundian palace in Bruges known as the "Prince's Court."[3] Here the chapel complex underwent a thorough renovation from 1456 to 1459, directed by Isabella of Portugal, wife of Philip the Good.[4] Although now lost, we know that an oratory of some sort existed here as it is described in one of the accounts of Charles the Bold's wedding celebrations.[5] A recent digital reconstruction of the palace proposed that the chapel and its altar could be viewed from a raised oratory. The authors, Sanne Maekelberg and Krista De Jonge, also suggested that the chapel and oratory at the Prince's Court in Bruges may have served as the model for a further development at the Rihour Palace in Lille, which does survive. This building was begun by Philip the Good in 1453 and completed in 1473, during Charles the Bold's reign. At the Rihour Palace, the oratory was placed on the upper level, giving a view of both the main chapel and another smaller chapel (see Figure 9).[6]

In Bruges, this practice of observing mass from an unseen, raised position was not solely a royal phenomenon. Another oratory was built in the Adornes family's private church known as

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[3] Sanne Maekelberg and Krista De Jonge, "The Prince's Court at Bruges: A Reconstruction of the Lost Residence of the Dukes of Burgundy," *Architectural Histories* 6(1) 2018, 1.

[4] Ibid., 9.

[5] Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), 51.

[6] Maekelberg and De Jonge, "The Prince's Court at Bruges," 9.

the Jerusalem Chapel.[7] The chapel's interior was almost entirely constructed between 1470 and 1483[8] by Anselmo Adornes, a leading member of the Order of the Dry Tree, a confraternity which supported polyphony.[9] The highly unusual chapel features a recreation of Christ's tomb in its crypt, and an upper and lower sanctuary, all overlooked by the family's oratory which connected to their living quarters. Adornes traveled to the Holy Land in February 1470, arriving back in April 1471, and seems to have conceived of this design on his return, in part to accommodate the relics he had accumulated during his trip.[10]

English Music Patrons and Their Oratories

I propose that the oratories built under Gruuthuse, Edward, Anselmo, Philip the Good and Charles the Bold, which all took place alongside patronage of polyphonic music, appear to be part of a wider Anglo-Burgundian phenomenon. One contemporary example is found at Christ's College, Cambridge, founded by Lady Margaret Beaufort in 1505 (see Figure 10). Margaret, a descendant of Edward III, was a preeminent figure at the English court, and her son would become Henry VII. She had multiple connections to Edward IV, and in the 1470s, was married to Thomas Lord Stanley, who was then the Steward of the king's household.[11] Like Edward, Margaret was renowned for her musical patronage and had her own large chapel choir—by 1508 it had ten children and twelve gentlemen[12]—which served as a feeder to the choir of the Chapel

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[7] Martens, "Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482," 220.

[8] Ibid., 308.

[9] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 72.

[10] Martens, "Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482," 314.

[11] Kisby, "The Early-Tudor Royal Household Chapel," 266.

[12] Fiona Kisby, "A Mirror of Monarchy: Music and Musicians in the Household Chapel of the Lady Margaret Beaufort, Mother of Henry VII," *Early Music History* 16 (1997): 215.

Royal.[13] In the new complex of buildings at Christ's College, the upper floor of the Master's Lodge was set aside as accommodation for Margaret when she was in residence.[14] One of the small rooms in these quarters has an oriel window that looks out into the chapel, and is therefore thought to have been Margaret's oratory.[15] In the chapel itself, the statutes required members of the college to perform a substantial number of sung services.[16]

A slightly later example is found in the musical and architectural projects of Bishop Edmund Audley (c.1440–1524). Audley was appointed canon and prebendary[17] of St. George's Windsor in 1474, and therefore would have experienced many of Edward's reforms there.[18] He was then appointed Bishop of Rochester in 1480, where he demonstrated a musical interest: he was responsible for installing choir stalls in the Lady Chapel to facilitate polyphonic Lady masses.[19] Audley moved on to be Bishop of Hereford in 1492, where he built his own personal two-story chantry chapel on the south side of the Lady Chapel (see Figure 12).[20] The form of the chapel undoubtedly owes much to the design of similar spaces at St. George's Windsor,[21] but the function of this chapel has not been settled: one explanation is that it was an oratory, another is that it was a singing gallery. I propose that the former is more likely if it is considered as part of

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[13] Kisby, "The Early-Tudor Royal Household Chapel," 91.

[14] Nikolaus Pevsner, *Cambridgeshire*, 2nd ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), 50.

[15] Ibid.

[16] J. P. C. Roach, *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume 3, the City and University of Cambridge* (London: Victoria County History, 1959) 429–36.

[17] An individual receiving a lifelong income called a prebend that was associated with an ecclesiastical benefice (an office in the church).

[18] Cathy Oakes, "In Pursuit of Heaven: The Two Chantry Chapels of Bishop Edmund Audley at Hereford and Salisbury Cathedrals," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 164:1 (2011): 197–8.

[19] Ibid., 205.

[20] Ibid., 206.

[21] Ibid., 205.

this longer lineage of galleries overlooking musico-liturgical spaces, especially given that the upper level of the chapel offers what Carol Oakes describes as a "dress-circle view" of the altar.[22]

Sympathetic Insiders

The idea that listening to polyphony was important to late-medieval European music patrons runs counter to comments that scholars have made about the performance of polyphony and musical patronage in this period. For example, Jeffrey Dean, in his study of performances by the Sistine Chapel singers in around 1500, argues that "sacred polyphony was composed and performed to be listened to by the singers themselves."[23] Dean goes on to argue that "the actual listeners, the expected listeners, the listeners for whom the music was composed and performed, comprised the singers themselves and a few sympathetic outsiders."[24] And Roger Bowers states that those who funded choirs "did not see themselves as patrons of music" and that their overall aim was not to foster and grow the art of polyphony but instead was "the augmentation of the store of merit in heaven that would be found on the Day of Judgement to have been aggregated to their account."[25]

While the role of singers as listeners to their own performances and the desired spiritual advantage of patrons must be acknowledged, I contend that specific circumstances of late-medieval Burgundy and England suggest alternative motivations for the performance of

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[22] Oakes, "In Pursuit of Heaven," 206.

[23] Jeffrey Dean, "Listening to Sacred Polyphony c.1500," *Early Music* 25, no. 4 (1997): 620.

[24] Ibid., 628.

[25] Roger Bowers, "Aristocratic and Popular Piety in the Patronage of Music in the Fifteenth-Century Netherlands," *Studies in Church History* 28 (1992): 215.

polyphony. In this milieu, Dean's supposed divide between singers and non-singers is undermined by the case of the Duke of Burgundy, Charles the Bold. There is significant information about the duke's involvement in music, not as a passive patron but as an active and even creative participant. For example, a description by court chronicler Jean Molinet of Charles' habits at the siege of Neuss in 1475 details how "every evening he has something new sung in his quarters and sometimes his lordship sings, though he does not have a good voice."[26] Another account, from the historian Thomas Basin (1412–1491) who was on the payroll of Louis XI and therefore not predisposed to flatter Charles, describes the duke as "loving excellent singers as did his father. So he always had a worthy and magnificent chapel and took great pleasure in the singing of his singers; and he even himself sometimes sang in private."[27]

As well as being a singer and a listener, Charles was a composer: an account from 1460, recorded in a chant manuscript at Cambrai Cathedral, describes how "Charles composed a motet and all its music,[28] which was sung in his presence after Mass had been said in Cambrai Cathedral by the master and the children."[29] Fallows argues that "a motet and all its music" should be understood to mean "sophisticated polyphony," and that as this was the work of a twenty-seven-year-old man it was not a schoolboy exercise.[30] In the case of Charles the Bold

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[26] David Fallows, "Charles the Bold as Patron, Singer, and Composer," *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 69 (2019): 5.

[27] Ibid., 6.

[28] Barbara Haggh-Huglo, *Recollecting the Virgin Mary with Music: Guillaume Du Fay's Chant across Five Centuries*, Chapter 12 (Münster: American Institute of Musicology, forthcoming), suggests that the translation here should be "and all the chant," and that whether it was plainchant or polyphony, this could refer to a setting of a Marian text or one for St. Severin.

[29] Fallows, "Charles the Bold," 3.

[30] Ibid., 4.

therefore, we have a clear example of a "sympathetic insider" as opposed to Dean's "sympathetic outsider."

Of course, the fact that a sovereign observes a mass in an oratory does not imply that they are focused on the liturgy: a Venetian ambassador reported from Henry VIII's court that the king habitually attended three to five masses a day in his private closet, but that he would complete paperwork while he did so.[31] Likewise, oratories had other uses than listening to masses: the famous frontispiece from the Hours of Mary of Burgundy (reproduced in Figure 8) depicts the interior of an oratory being used for private devotion. This image is of interest to this study because it is now thought to have been commissioned for Charles the Bold's daughter, Mary, and possibly to depict her.[32] Mary, too, was a patron of music: she provided an endowment for Our Lady's Collegiate Church in Bruges in 1482, in connection with her burial there, that would pay for two daily sung masses performed by the succentor, four choirboys and an organist.[33] It is possible that many of the oratories discussed above would have been glazed, originally, as in this example. This would have affected the listening experience, unless the windows could be opened as they are here.[34] Certainly, the Gruuthuse oratory was originally intended to have glazing, as the permission notice from the chapter makes reference to this.[35]

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[31] Fiona Kisby, "When the King Goeth a Procession": Chapel Ceremonies and Services, the Ritual Year, and Religious Reforms at the Early Tudor Court, 1485–1547," *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 1 (2001): 52.

[32] Anne Van Buren-Hagopian, "The Master of Mary of Burgundy and His Colleagues: The State of Research and Questions of Method," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 38, no. 3/4 (1975): 275.

[33] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 277.

[34] I am grateful to Olga Haldey for raising the issue of glazed and unglazed oratory windows, and how they would affect the listening experience.

[35] Martens, "Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482," 532.

Figure 8: *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, Vienna, Austrian National Library, Cod. 1857, fol. 14v.[36]

Acoustical Factors

Even if the design of the oratories was not made primarily to improve the listener's experience of polyphony, at least two aspects of the study of musical acoustics suggest that it may have done so. Firstly, there is the issue of the apparent similarities between the late-medieval oratory and

[36] This image is in the public domain: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hours_of_Mary_of_Burgundy_Virgin_and_Child.jpg.

the subsequent design of boxes in theaters and concert halls. Studies have shown that one of the benefits of the box is that the initial-time-delay gap[37] is generally shorter in the balcony than on the ground floor.[38] This effect would only be increased in a church with a stone vaulted ceiling and a significant reverberation time. Therefore, moving from the position of listening on the ground level to the upper level of an oratory would improve the clarity of polyphonic music. Second, there is the issue of higher tones diffracting less successfully than lower tones.[39] Therefore if an ensemble changed from being an adult vocal ensemble singing up to, say, G_4 to one with the addition of boys' voices singing up to G_5, it would be more important to have an unobstructed line of listening to the ensemble. In this way, an oratory could prove a useful vantage point, especially given the crowding at some ceremonies, such as the one depicted in Figure 11.

It is also important to consider whether changes to performing ensembles would have induced late-medieval listeners to find locations where the acoustics would be optimal for them. For example, in England until at least the 1450s, the archetypal ensemble for performing polyphony consisted of four skilled adult singers.[40] Yet by the mid-1470s, changes in the scoring of polyphonic repertoire, increases in the vocal tessitura, and associated substantial expansions of personnel led to choirs that could number more than thirty, such as the one Edward installed at Windsor.[41] Of course, a choir that is eight times larger, does not equate to a choral sound that is

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[37] The initial time delay gap (ITDG) measures the distance between the arrival of the direct sound and the first reflections. A shorter ITDG is associated with a clearer sound.

[38] Leo L. Beranek, *Music, Acoustics & Architecture* (New York: Wiley, 1962), 468.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Roger Bowers, "To Chorus from Quartet," 16.

[41] These changes are laid out in Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel in the 15th Century."

eight times as loud. Instead, each doubling of the size of a choir will add three decibels. Therefore, a group of thirty-two singers would be nine decibels louder than a choir of four singers.[42] However, the effect on the listener of this increase would still have been substantial: it is widely accepted that a ten-decibel increase is perceived as being twice as loud.[43] Therefore, it should be considered as a possibility that the late-medieval worshiper, especially if they were the patron funding the music and the design of the church or chapel, might want to occupy a different listening position if the polyphonic performance in the 1480s was almost twice as loud as it had been in the 1450s.

While I have not yet found evidence that proves the importance of listening from the oratory, the development of these spaces alongside late-medieval choral expansions suggests a possible relationship. There is consensus that Edward's Windsor oratory was at least influenced by Gruuthuse's in Bruges, and as I will outline in the next two chapters, there are hints that Edward and Richard's choral reforms were inspired by those of their Burgundian peers. These coincidences lead to the broader question of whether musical changes can be seen to work together with architectural and acoustic ones during this period. My argument, based on the polyphonic patrons and their architectural projects detailed above, is that there are signs of a correlation.

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[42] Ingo R. Titze and Lynn Maxfield, "Acoustic Factors Affecting the Dynamic Range of a Choir," *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* vol. 142, 4 (2017): 2468.

[43] Lincoln Gray, "Properties of Sound," *Journal of Perinatology* 20 (2000): S6.

Figure 9: The Main Chapel at the Rihour Palace in Lille, showing the large window to the oratory on the upper level.

© Sanne Maekelberg 2018 (used with permission)

Figure 10: The Chapel at Christ's College Cambridge, with a window into an oratory on the upper level on the right.

Photo by David Iliff. License: Creative Commons BY-SA 3.0.

Figure 11: Anonymous miniaturist, *Presentation of the Keys of the City to the Virgin*, biccherna (painted book cover on panel), 1483, Siena, Museo delle Tavolette di Biccherna.[44]

[44] This image is in the public domain: https://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/m/master/xunk_it/xunk_it3/offering.html

Figure 12: Hereford Cathedral Lady Chapel, with the double-level Audley Chantry/Oratory on the right.

Photo by David Iliff. License: Creative Commons BY-SA 3.0.

Chapter Four
Edward IV's Experiences of Hearing the Choir of Charles the Bold

Charles the Bold was a keen singer and composer of polyphony who in the years immediately before 1470 had spent a great deal of money and effort ensuring his chapel choir was both large and of a high quality.[1] Despite the complex political circumstances, Edward and the duke met on a number of occasions during the king's exile. Edward and his courtiers' contact with the duke's impressive choral ensemble may have influenced the subsequent reorganization and reform of English choirs. I will describe the opportunities Edward would have had to hear Charles' choir, and detail what is known about its makeup and repertoire at the time. And I will present evidence that the prescribed use of six high voices in performances of polyphony by the duke's choir was part of a trend of installing six choirboys in choirs in the Burgundian territory and may have been the inspiration for the introduction of cohorts of the same size in English ensembles.

Edward's Relationship with Charles the Bold

The ties between Edward and Charles were formalized by the Duke's marriage, in 1468, to Edward's sister Margaret of York.[2] In the same year, Edward was made a Knight of the Golden Fleece, Charles' chivalric order, at its meeting in Bruges.[3] While Edward did not attend either event, membership in Charles' order tied him to an organization with a flourishing musical component: Barbara Haggh-Huglo notes that from 1468 onwards the *acta* of the Order of the

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[1] For Charles as singer and composer, David Fallows, "Charles the Bold as Patron, Singer, and Composer," *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 69 (2019): 3–18; for Charles' spending see Paula Higgins, "Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture in Late Fifteenth-Century France and Burgundy" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1987), 79.

[2] Vaughan, *Charles the Bold,* 49–53.

[3] Details of Edward's joining the order are given in Frédéric Auguste Ferdinand Thomas de Reiffenberg, *Histoire de l'Ordre de la Toison d'Or* (Brussels 1830), 55–8.

Golden Fleece contain an increasing amount of information about its music, which may have been linked to Charles' subsequent reorganization of his chapel choir,[4] and William Prizer has emphasized the importance of polyphony at the Order's meetings.[5] In 1469, the bond between the two rulers was again reinforced as Charles became a Knight of the Garter, Edward's equivalent order. But the strength of the alliance between Edward and Charles should not be overstated: Charles continued to balance Yorkist and Lancastrian ties for the rest of his life. This can either be seen as part of the duke's wider strategy of remaining politically neutral, or as a stance that gave him the option of aligning himself with either side as circumstances required.

This policy of equanimity did not mean that Charles kept his distance from the English and their power struggles. For example, while the duke had a loyalty to the Yorkist faction through his wife Margaret and brother-in-law Edward, he also maintained two prominent Lancastrian exiles, Edmund Beaufort and Henry Holland, at his court. And in April and May of 1470, Charles had hosted the earl of Warwick, Edward's nemesis, at St. Omer. In fact, Charles was so devoted to his disinterested status that he attempted to intercede, unsuccessfully, between Warwick and Edward later in the year.[6]

The Political Circumstances on Edward's Arrival

The political circumstances of Edward's October 1470 arrival in the duke's territories were particularly fraught. Warwick had by now fallen foul of Charles, due to both an attack the Englishman's fleet had made on Burgundian shipping, and the earl's burgeoning alliance with

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[4] Barbara Haggh, "The Archives of the Order," 10.

[5] William F. Prizer, "Music and Ceremonial in the Low Countries: Philip the Fair and the Order of the Golden Fleece," *Early Music History* 5 (1985): 113–53.

[6] Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 61.

the French King Louis XI.[7] The second half of 1470 was also a time of rising hostility between Louis and Charles, with an exchange of strong rhetoric and tit-for-tat economic measures. By January 1471, France and Burgundy were on the brink of war, which eventually took the form of a series of skirmishes in February and March.[8]

These interconnected political pressures explain why Charles was very cautious about agreeing to a meeting with Edward, lest this be understood as a sign of a military alliance against France, something he was already being accused of by King Louis.[9] So, in the months after Edward's arrival, Charles was not prepared to organize even a private rendezvous and would only commit to paying the deposed English king's expenses.[10]

Edward at Charles' Court

It was therefore not until December 26, 1470, that Edward was summoned to meet Charles. We know of the summit between the two leaders at Aire-sur-la-Lys, near St. Omer, from January 2–4, 1471, and another at St. Pol, some twenty miles to the south, on January 7.[11] But Charles' itinerary suggests that Edward spent additional time at the Duke's castle at nearby Hesdin, where he could be found until January 31. These meetings did not result in a public declaration from the duke for Edward's cause, but they did help secure financial support and ships for the king's planned return to England where he would seek to retake his throne by force.

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[7] Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 61.

[8] Ibid., 64–7.

[9] Ibid., 67.

[10] Ibid., 64.

[11] Ross, *Edward IV*, 204.

The castle at Hesdin, where Edward is likely to have spent most time with Charles, was one of the duke's preferred residences. While the medieval castle no longer stands, the bailiff's accounts provide information about the building. We know that there were several chapels and oratories in the castle's private quarters, but that there was also a large chapel that served the whole community.[12] This building was two stories high and had a nave and a choir flanked by smaller rooms and chapels including oratories for the duke and duchess. In addition, an inventory from 1469 gives details of the chapel's furnishings.[13] It reveals an organization with meager resources, including those relating to music: the chapel there only possessed two chant books.[14] However, the Burgundian court was by no means static, and the limited inventory of Hesdin need not imply that musical life there was spartan when the duke was in residence. When Charles the Bold travelled, he took his entire chapel personnel with him, almost without fail.[15]

Charles the Bold's Chapel Choir

Charles' personal involvement in music is firmly established. The duke was himself both a singer and a composer.[16] He also maintained close connections to the careers of musicians who

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[12] Anne Van Buren-Hagopian, "Trois Inventaires de la Chapelle du Château d'Hesdin (1384–1469). Vêtements Liturgiques, Manuscrits et un Reliquaire de Saint Louis," *Publications du Centre Européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* 25 (1985): 34.

[13] Van Buren-Hagopian, "Trois inventaires de la chapelle du château d'Hesdin (1384–1469): vêtements liturgiques, manuscrits et un reliquaire de Saint Louis," 33–4. Van Buren-Hagiopan's only reference to the chant books is: "La présence de deux livres de chant seulement, différents, indique que seuls le maître du chœur et le clergé voyaient des notes écrites…"

[14] It is conceivable that the inventory implies the Duke and Duchess, just two years into their reign, were planning an upgrade. This would explain why the Duke was so devoted to the residence, it being his preferred base during the second half of 1469 and the early part of 1470.

[15] Higgins, "Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture," 92.

[16] The details of Charles' musical interests and abilities are fully laid out in Fallows, "Charles the Bold as Patron, Singer, and Composer," *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 69 (2019): 3–18.

were employed at his court such as Antoine Busnois and Hayne van Ghizeghem.[17] Paula Higgins summarizes that "[Charles'] musical training and interests evidently surpassed those of all other fifteenth-century princes."[18] It is therefore not surprising that the duke's accounts and ordinances reveal the considerable resources he spent on maintaining his chapel choir.

Perhaps the most significant musician Edward could have encountered at Charles' court was Busnois, a musician who was described by Johannes Tinctoris in 1474, together with Johannes Ockeghem, as "the most outstanding and most famous teachers of the art of music."[19] Busnois would have been emerging as an important musician at the Burgundian court at this point: Higgins argues that although at the beginning of 1470, Busnois was not yet an official member of the chapel,[20] he was already involved as a singer, as robes for him in that role had been commissioned in 1469.[21] The chapel records suggest that he was a full member of the chapel by October 1470.[22]

In the period immediately before Edward's exile, Charles' accounts reveal a preoccupation with increasing the singing staff of his chapel, which, on his accession, the duke seems to have judged as not meeting his requirements.[23] As Higgins puts it, in the years from 1467 to 1470, "Charles appears to have been especially concerned with expanding the vocal

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[17] David Fallows, "Specific Information on the Ensembles for Composed Polyphony, 1400–1474," in *Studies in the Performance of Late Medieval Music*, ed. Stanley Boorman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 110.

[18] Higgins, "Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture," 63.

[19] Paula Higgins, "In Hydraulis" Revisited: New Light on the Career of Antoine Busnois," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 39, no. 1 (1986): 36.

[20] Higgins, "Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture," 68–70.

[21] Ibid., 69.

[22] Higgins, "In Hydraulis" Revisited," 43–4.

[23] Ibid.

forces of his chapel."[24] While there is little evidence of what polyphonic music was sung in Charles' burgeoning chapel,[25] we do have information about the contemporary makeup of his choir. This is provided by the court ordinances of 1469, and payroll accounts from the same year. The ordinances, in particular, provide a great deal of detail, with a quarter of the folios relating to the organization of Charles' chapel.[26] For example, one subsection makes it clear that new standards of professionalism were now required from the members of the chapel. No longer would "immoderate talking, chatting, conversations, mockeries, signs, derisions, games, laughing and other vain and frivolous things" be acceptable.[27]

This dedicated organization of chapel activities has a direct parallel in Edward's actions on his return to England. Here he commissioned his own major court ordinance in 1471, the *Black Book of the Household*, and a subsequent one in 1478.[28] While the *Black Book of the Household* does not survive in full, it is significant in musical terms because it introduces the title of Master of the Choristers for the first time at the Chapel Royal.[29] And the ordinance in 1478 came at another significant moment for the Chapel Royal: Henry Abingdon, who had been Master of the Choristers from 1455, stepped down.[30] He was replaced by Giles Banaster, who had been an employee of Edward's since 1469, and whose music features in the Eton Choirbook

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[24] Higgins, "Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture," 79.

[25] Ibid., 95.

[26] Fallows, "Specific Information," 110.

[27] Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 194.

[28] Reproduced in A.R. Myers, *The Household of Edward IV: The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959).

[29] Kisby, "The Early-Tudor Royal Household Chapel," 104.

[30] Ibid., 442.

(Eton College, Ms. 178).[31] The organization of Edward's chapel music through court ordinances and the promotion of younger personnel suggest the influence of Charles the Bold's reforms.

Charles' ordinance of 1469, however, goes into more detail about music than Edward's later documents. The most important feature is the directive for the singing of polyphony (according to David Fallows' translation of "chant du livre").[32] It specifies that "there shall be at least six high voices, three tenors, three contrabasses and two *moiens* [singers with a "medium" range]."[33] We can therefore envisage a situation where Edward might have heard such a group at the duke's court, formed of a minimum of fourteen singers, performing polyphony in a liturgical context. But reconstructing the basic sonority of this ensemble is challenging, because the identity of the top part of this choir remains unclear. There is a question mark over whether the "six high voices" were intended to be men or children. Fallows argues that the court ordinances, if taken in conjunction with court account books from January 1469, can answer this beyond doubt. These accounts list the chapel staff at this point: there were thirteen chaplains, four clercs, and six sommeliers—these were, in effect, three ranks of singers, in descending order of superiority, some of whom in each category could also be priests.[34] No boys are mentioned.

There is a problem with Fallows' calculations, however. The ordinances state that the sommeliers were not primarily musical, and Fallows interprets the 6/3/3/2 requirement for polyphony as excluding them. This means that at the time of these accounts, the fourteen singers needed for polyphony would have been drawn from the thirteen chaplains and four clercs. But a

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[31] Magnus Williamson, "Royal Image-Making and Textual Interplay in Gilbert Banaster's 'O Maria Et Elizabeth'," *Early Music History* 19 (2000): 242.

[32] Fallows, "Specific Information," 111. Barbara Haggh-Huglo says this was discant improvised from a chant book following established rules of counterpoint.

[33] Ibid., 110.

[34] Ibid., 113.

line directly after that says that the polyphonic group of fourteen must exclude the four chaplains needed to officiate at High Mass.[35] Thus, in January of 1469, it is my reading that four-part polyphony would not have been possible at High Mass in the Duke's Chapel if only the singers on the payroll are included in the calculation, as at most only thirteen singers would have been available.

Fallows, having discounted the idea that the "hautes voix" were those of boys, grapples with the alternatives. He examines the idea of the ducal choir having, in modern terms, either six tenors or six falsettists on the top line of polyphony, with two or three singers on the other parts. As Fallows admits, to the modern musician this seems unlikely to produce a suitable balance, unless a vastly different singing technique is being employed to those of today. I believe it is therefore worth considering the possibility that the six "hautes voix" may have been boys, who for some reason were not referred to in the January 1469 account books but were nevertheless included in the prescription for polyphony in the ordinance.

Boys had certainly played a role in the polyphonic Burgundian choirs of previous decades. Philip the Good had ensured that the Order of the Golden Fleece had four choristers in its chapel choir from 1425, based at St. Peter's collegiate church in Lille.[36] It could have been these boys or those based in the order's church, the St. Chapelle in Dijon, who sang polyphonic excerpts at the Order's Feast of the Pheasant in 1454, the famous banquet hosted by Philip. On that occasion, one of the theatrical scenes was presented in a mock church, where "three little choirboys and a tenor sang a very sweet song."[37] Later in the feast, a boy sang the treble part of

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[35] Fallows, "Specific Information," 110.

[36] Prizer, "Music and Ceremonial," 116.

[37] Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, eds. *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*. 2nd ed. (Australia: Thomson/Schirmer, 2008), 70, quoting Jeanne Marix, *Les*

the rondeau "Je ne vis oncques la pareille" while a "stag" sang the tenor. This was followed by the singers in the mock church singing a motet. The high regard in which the boy choristers were held is shown by the care taken when they travelled on horseback to performances. In these instances, large cushions would be provided for their comfort.[38]

There is also iconographic evidence supporting the prevalence of singing boys in Burgundian ducal circles, found in Jean Mansel's *La Fleur des Histoires*. This manuscript is a world history in two volumes that was cataloged in the inventory of Philip the Good's library made on his death in 1467.[39] One of its numerous illustrations (see Figure 13) depicts a mass being celebrated. In the image, a nobleman is worshiping in his closet, with a choir singing in the foreground. Grouped around the music stand, the ensemble includes five or six male singers and three boy choristers.

While the illustration is not thought to be a direct depiction of Philip the Good, because the duke was customarily shown wearing black clothes, there are clear connections between the image and the Burgundian court chapel. Firstly, in the drawing, the coats of arms of ancient Burgundy and Flanders are found in the stained glass windows on both sides of the chapel.[40] Second, Lisa Deam argues that as this miniature falls within the section of *La Fleur des Histoires* on French history, it is one of several designed to have "special meaning for a duke obsessed

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Musiciens de la cour de Bourgogne au XVe siècle (Strasbourg: Heitz & Co., 1937), 38–41 (from Mathieu d'Escouchy, *Chronique*). Translated by Richard Taruskin.

[38] Jeanne Marix, "Hayne van Ghizeghem: Musician at the Court of the 15th-Century Burgundian Dukes," *The Musical Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (1942): 278, quoting Lille, Archives départementales du Nord, Series B 3361, fols. 28r and 129v.

[39] Anne Dubois, "La Fleur des Histoires de Jean Mansel," *Art de l'Enluminure* no. 72 (2020): 6.

[40] Ibid.

with crusading and with asserting his stature and lineage."[41] And the artist of the illustration is thought to be Maître de Thérouanne, active from the 1450s.[42] The Maître de Thérouanne was probably a colleague of Simon Marmion, an artist who worked for both Philip the Good and Charles the Bold.[43] Finally, Mansel, the author of *La Fleur des Histoires*, also provides a connection to Burgundian court life: he was a civil servant in the service of the Burgundian dukes who held several positions at Hesdin Castle from 1435 onwards, and was responsible for the works carried out there for Charles in 1470.[44]

There are also numerous records in Burgundy during this period of choirboys in groups of six, which could be counterparts to the duke's six "hautes voix." As early as 1450, for example, there were six choirboys at Tournai Cathedral.[45] A slightly later instance is found at St. Gudula's Church in Brussels, where six choirboys were trained to sing polyphony from 1466, joining ten adult singers already on the payroll since 1444.[46] And elsewhere near the same city, at the church of Sts. Guido and Peter in Anderlecht, there are records of choirboys as early as the fourteenth century, and a formal endowment for six choirboys, aged nine to ten-years-old, whose role is thought to have involved singing polyphony, was made in 1481 by Willelmus Swinnen.[47] In this case there is a direct connection to St. Donatian's Church in Bruges, the parish church of

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[41] Lisa Deam, "Mapping the Past: The "Fleur Des Histoires" (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, Ms. 9231–9232) in the Context of Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Historiography" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2001), 81.

[42] Dubois, "La Fleur des Histoires," 14.

[43] Sandra Hindman, "The Case of Simon Marmion: Attributions & Documents," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 40, no. 3/4 (1977): 198.

[44] Dubois, "La Fleur des Histoires," 6.

[45] Barbara Haggh, "Music, Liturgy, and Ceremony in Brussels, 1350–1500" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1988), 160.

[46] Haggh, "Music, Liturgy, and Ceremony," 83 and 222.

[47] Ibid., 163; Haggh-Huglo, *Recollecting the Virgin Mary in Music*, Chapter 15.

the Burgundian court, as Swinnen was the secretary to John of Burgundy (1404–1479), the church's provost.

St. Donatian's church itself offers one final instance of the phenomenon in Burgundy of a six-choirboy cohort. The church was connected to the ducal chapel by way of its music staff, who often held simultaneous appointments both at the church and at court. One example of this was the singer Gilles Joye, a complex figure whose career is examined in Chapter 5. In the 1460s, Joye was first a clerk and then a chaplain in the ducal chapel, whilst also holding a prebend at St. Donatian's. On leaving court due to illness in 1468 he was given administrative tasks at St. Donatian's. Among these was the instruction by the chapter in 1469 for Joye to work on the financing of a new endowment for the church's four choirboys. A year later, Johannes vanden Coutere made a donation of rental income to the endowment for these choirboys, but the project was not completed until 1484, when the group of four choirboys that sang polyphony was increased to six.[48]

Connections to English Choirs

This pattern emerging in Burgundian choirs of groups of six choristers has an apparent parallel in new English ensembles established soon after. For example, a new foundation, Middleham College in Yorkshire, was created in 1478 by Edward's brother, the future Richard III, who had accompanied Edward during his exile. At Middleham, the number of choristers was to be six, [49] and the college statutes state that they were to sing polyphony at Lady mass daily with the clerks,

[48] Hendrik Callewier, "'What You Do on the Sly… Will Be Deemed Forgiven in the Sight of the Most High': Gilles Joye and the Changing Status of Singers in Fifteenth-Century Bruges," *Journal of the Alamire Foundation* 1 (2009): 98.

[49] Roger Bowers, "Choral Institutions Within the English Church: Their Constitution and Development, 1340–1500" (PhD diss., University of East Anglia, 1975), 6031.

with priked song [notated polyphony] and organs.[50] One of the four clerks was to be charged with educating the boys "in playne song [plainsong], priked song, faburdon [improvised polyphony based on a middle voice], countr' [a form of counterpoint?], descant [elsewhere "discant," improvised singing above a tenor voice] of all mesures used in any Cathedrall church or Collage."[51] Richard also made plans for a college at Barnard Castle in County Durham in 1478 which never came to fruition, but here too we know that the institution was to have six choristers.[52] It was also to have ten clerks, which suggests that the number of choristers was not chosen simply to be in proportion to the number of adult singers. Another new foundation, Jesus College, Rotherham, was established with six choristers in 1483, who with their singing master had to perform daily services, a weekly Jesus mass and a Marian antiphon at vespers.[53]

This pattern of establishing six boys in new English colleges had its parallels with those ensembles that were being adapted rather than started from scratch. For example, in 1480 the Lady Chapel Choir of Westminster Abbey was modernized in order to meet the musical demands of the new era. In practice, this meant adding a team of boy choristers to the existing group of adult male singers. Again, the number of boys chosen for this purpose was six.[54] And at Worcester Cathedral, Bishop John Alcock, one of Edward's Privy Councillors, also oversaw a

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[50] James Raine, "The Statutes Ordained by Richard duke of Gloucester for the College of Middleham, dated July 4, 18 Edw. IV. [1478]," *Archaeological Journal* 14 (1857): 160–70.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Bowers, "Choral Institutions," 6031.

[53] Ibid., 6028, and Arthur Francis Leach, *Early Yorkshire Schools*, (Leeds: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1903), 2: xxxiii.

[54] Roger Bowers, "The Musicians and Liturgy of the Lady Chapels of the Monastery Church c.1235–1540," in *Westminster Abbey: The Lady Chapel of Henry VII*, eds. Tim Tatton-Brown and Richard Mortimer (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 48.

similar transformation. Here, the Lady Chapel Choir had previously had only one or two singing boys, but six were recorded for the first time in 1479.[55]

Conclusion

Edward's time as Charles the Bold's guest would have given him opportunities to observe the duke's chapel first-hand, and even to take part in its liturgies himself. While there are other ways in which the king could have learned about the latest developments in music for worship on the continent, such as from ambassadors and correspondence, this would surely be no match for experiencing the duke's highly regulated ensemble in person. The link between the duke's organization of his choir and Edward's subsequent focus on ordering his own Chapel Royal, suggests that the king was aware of Charles' work in this area.

It seems conceivable that Edward would have heard the Duke's chapel choir on several occasions during his time at court in January 1471, perhaps at Hesdin Castle. This would have been a rare opportunity to take in what was a "normal" occasion in the chapel, rather than a lavish ceremony. If Edward did hear the duke's choir sing polyphony with its requisite "six high voices," given Charles' efforts to recruit an excellent and sizable choir, it is likely to have been an impressive experience. Given that evidence from numerous English and Burgundian examples from this period suggests that the desirable number of boy choristers on a polyphonic team was six, I propose that Edward and his entourage did hear the duke's six "hautes voix" sing polyphony, and that this subsequently became a model for choirs in English institutions.

[55] Bowers, "Choral Institutions," 6050–51.

Figure 13: Célébration de la messe en présence d'un seigneur (detail from Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. 9232, fol. 269r), attrib. Maître de Thérouanne in *La Fleur des Histoires*.[56]

[REDACTED IMAGE]

[56] Barbara Haggh-Huglo notes that here a bishop is celebrating as is evident from his mitre; the red hat could be that of a cardinal.

Chapter 5
The Choirboys and Lay Clerks of St. Donatian's Church in Bruges as a Polyphonic Model

St. Donatian's Church

While Edward IV's lodgings at the Gruuthuse Palace in Bruges would surely have allowed him to hear the singing in the adjacent Collegiate Church of Our Lady, another nearby church in the city, St. Donatian's, could not have escaped the king's attention. Perhaps the first thing Edward would have noticed about St. Donatian's would have been its impact on the Bruges soundscape. The bells of the church, pitched *ut*, rang nine times in the early evening, in groups of three strikes, to provide a rhythm for citizens to pray the *Ave Maria*.[1] Although there is no evidence of Edward and his entourage attending St. Donatian's, the church would have been conspicuous both visually and by reputation: it was the most striking feature of the urban landscape, and maintained a dominant role in Bruges' civic life through its noble parishioners and impressive collection of relics.[2] The church also held the highest ceremonial status given that it always provided the sacrament used in general processions through the city[3] which by 1470 were a monthly occurrence.[4] Such occasions would have been visually arresting, too, featuring banners painted by Jan van Eyck and Hans Memling.[5]

St. Donatian's was also the church in Bruges that was patronized more than any other by the Dukes of Burgundy,[6] and in the fifteenth century its parishioners included all members of the

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[1] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 3.

[2] Andrew Brown and Hendrik Callewier, "Religious Practices, c.1200–1500," in *Medieval Bruges: c. 850–1550*, eds. Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 330.

[3] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 93.

[4] Ibid., 79.

[5] Strohm, "Music, Ritual, and Painting," 30.

[6] Brown, "Bruges and the Burgundian 'Theatre-State'," 579.

Burgundian court.[7] The geographical parish, however, only extended to the *Burg*, the square in which the church was situated. The church's clergy had only light pastoral duties, allowing them plenty of time for the liturgy.[8] In the latter half of the fifteenth century St. Donatian's Church had the leading polyphonic ensemble of men and boys in Bruges, if not in Europe,[9] likely to have been impressive even to a royal guest like Edward. With its substantial roster of thirteen boy choristers, all given training in reading polyphonic notation, and around twelve professional adult singers, the musical program at St. Donatian's is the one most likely to have influenced Edward's choral reforms on his return to England.[10]

The Polyphonic Choir of Men and Boys

The singing tradition at St. Donatian's already had a significant history by 1470, which included more than half a century of men and boys singing polyphony together. An account roll from 1251–52 mentions the positions of organist, succentor and *rector scholarum*, while an endowment for eight boy choristers was made as early as 1312.[11] St. Donatian's employed adult singers in positions known as clerkships, and by the late fifteenth century, these numbered

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[7] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 11.

[8] Ibid., 12.

[9] Hendrik Callewier, "The Singers of the Bruges Churches and the Musical Chapel of the Dukes of Burgundy," in *Staging the Court of Burgundy*, eds. Wim Blockmans, Till-Holger Borchert, Nele Gabriels, Johan Oosterman, and Anne van Oosterwijk (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2013), 216.

[10] The modelling of one choir on another is not unheard of: one example is the choir of St. Bavo's in Ghent, which was assembled following the model of the choir and choirboys of St. Peter's in Lille. See: Bruno Bouckaert, "La Vie musicale à Saint-Bavon: Le Développement d'un ensemble musical professionnel après 1536," in *La Cathedrale Saint-Bavon de Gand du Moyen Age au Baroque*, ed. Bruno Bouckaert (Ghent: Ludion, 2000), 148–89.

[11] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 13.

eighteen.[12] The holders of these positions were normally lay clerks but included an increasing number of priests over the fifteenth century. While not all of the clerks were singers, from around 1440 onwards, the number from this group that was available to sing polyphony was around twelve.[13] These musically able clerks were known as the *socii de musica*.

A major development was the new endowment for singing boys at St. Donatian's, created in 1421, which was in part a response to the depleted value of the funding from 1312.[14] This new endowment was given so that four of the boys, known as *chorales*, could learn and perform polyphonic music. Strohm argues that funds given in 1415 and 1417 for music at specific liturgies involving the boy choristers suggest that polyphony was already generally performed by a mixture of men and boys at St. Donatian's, and that the 1421 endowment simply formalized this practice.

The 1421 endowment is a useful document for the purposes of this study because it gives clear details of the boys' responsibilities. The main duty of the four *chorales* was to sing a polyphonic mass every day. The *Missa de Salve*,[15] dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was to be sung in the Lady Chapel situated behind the choir. The boys would be joined in this by the succentor, and although it is not mentioned in the rubric, presumably also by some of the church's clerks, as was the case in a similar foundation set up in 1457 at Cambrai Cathedral. In addition to this daily duty, the *chorales* were also required to attend daily high mass and vespers, and to sing polyphony at those services on appropriate feast days. Strohm argues that the 1421 endowment

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[12] Ibid., 13.

[13] Ibid., 26.

[14] Ibid., 22.

[15] So called because it is a votive mass for the Virgin Mary beginning with the introit or entrance chant *Salve sancta parens*.

at St. Donatian's is likely to have been transformative for the choral life in the region, as Philip the Good's subsequent foundations at St. Peter's Collegiate Church in Lille and the Sainte-Chapelle in Dijon appear to have taken it as a model.[16]

One aspect of the endowment that seems farsighted and even sophisticated was that in addition to the four boys who were recruited to sing polyphony, funding was also provided for nine *refectionales* or schoolboys.[17] The duties of these boys were also specified: they were to receive training from the succentor in the recitation of the matins[18] psalms as a minimum. Then, those who showed potential were also to be trained in discant and counterpoint, that is to say, the fundamentals of singing polyphony. In this way the *refectionales* could serve as reserves to the four choirboys tasked with singing the daily *Missa de Salve* and ensure that there was always a full team of trebles available for that purpose.

The choral forces at St. Donatian's in the years around 1470 would therefore have included both thirteen singing boys (four *chorales* with polyphonic duties and nine more junior *refectionales*) and around twelve adult singers among the *socii de musica*. The size of the ensemble at St. Donatian's is one possible connection to Edward's redesign of the choir at St. George's Windsor on his return to England. While the choir at Windsor had previously included six singing boys, from 1475 onwards the number of choristers was increased, reaching thirteen in 1482. In the same time period, the number of lay clerks was increased from four to thirteen.[19] Thus the new group of singers at St. George's Windsor came to be of very similar proportions to the choir of St. Donatian's in Bruges. Even before this, the first choir to have a significant

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[16] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 22 and 94.

[17] Ibid., 22.

[18] A nighttime worship service of the office.

[19] Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 199–200.

change in scale after Edward retook his throne was that of York Minster, where the existing team of seven choristers was increased to twelve.[20] Here, the influence of Edward's brother Richard, who had accompanied him in exile, is conceivable. Edward appointed Richard as Lord President of the Council of the North in 1472, to administer Northern England, and we know he secured funding for the Vicars Choral at York Minster in 1484.[21]

Edward's reforms at St. George's Windsor from 1475 also seem to have coincided with the boy choristers there singing polyphony for the first time. There is no indication of this in previous decades, when the boys' contribution to the Lady mass is thought to have extended only to chant and improvised descant.[22] As late as 1468, a new duty for the boys was added, but this only involved singing a plainsong antiphon.[23] However, evidence from musical sources from this period suggests that the polyphonic repertoire at Windsor would have included the boy choristers from at least the 1480s. In 1479, the composer Walter Lambe was appointed as a lay clerk at Windsor, serving intermittently in this role until at least 1504. Lambe's surviving works, which are all found in the Eton Choirbook, make use of up to six voice parts and cover a full three-octave range. There is little doubt that they were composed with the combined scope of the men and boys of St. George's Windsor in mind.[24]

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[20] Bowers, "To Chorus from Quartet," 31.

[21] Richard Barrie Dobson, *Church and Society in the Medieval North of England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1996), 246.

[22] Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 193.

[23] Ibid., 194.

[24] Ibid., 208–10.

Recruitment, Training, Income, and Career Prospects

At St. Donatian's the successful maintenance of a leading polyphonic choir required active recruitment. To find new choirboys, agents were sent out across Flanders and neighboring Brabant to scout young singing talent, covering a radius of around fifty miles around Bruges. Adult singers were drawn from a wider area, even if the majority came from Flanders itself. In the second half of the fifteenth century, singers were recruited to St. Donatian's from 's-Hertogenbosch, Antwerp, Ghent, Courtrai and Cambrai, as well as others formerly attached to the courts of Brabant, Savoy, the Queen of France and the Holy Roman Emperor.[25]

The training and experience that singers received at St. Donatian's was considered sufficiently valuable that the choir's members became highly desirable musicians elsewhere. Between c.1450 and c.1470, this began to mean that former clerks of St. Donatian's went on to illustrious international careers.[26] One prominent example of this is Jean Cordier, who Pamela Starr describes as "the most widely known and famous musician of his time."[27] The first of Cordier's appointments was as a clerk at St. Donatian's in 1460,[28] and Starr argues that he is likely to have gained his early musical education as a choirboy there, as it was common for musicians to receive their training and first professional job at the same institution.[29] Cordier left Bruges in 1467 for a post with the Medici family and to sing in the Baptistery choir in Florence. He subsequently held positions in most of the leading choirs of the day: the papal court, Naples,

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[25] Callewier, "The Singers of the Bruges Churches," 216.

[26] Callewier, "'What You Do on the Sly… Will Be Deemed Forgiven," 89.

[27] Pamela F. Starr, "Musical Entrepreneurship in 15th-Century Europe," *Early Music* 32, no. 1 (2004): 119.

[28] Starr, "Musical Entrepreneurship," 120.

[29] Ibid. Barbara Haggh-Huglo suggest that in the case of Brussels and Cambrai this was not the case, as boy choristers went on to university and then had careers elsewhere.

and Milan, before returning to the Burgundian court chapel in the 1480s.[30] Although Cordier's career was remarkable by any standards, his was not an isolated case: in the second half of the fifteenth century, former Bruges singers can be traced to important Italian centers, such as Rome, Florence, Ferrara, Milan and Naples, the Aragonese court in Spain, and the courts of the King of Hungary and the Duke of Savoy.[31] Singers from Bruges must therefore have had a reputation across Europe, in large part due to the polyphonic program at St. Donatian's.

The status of St. Donatian's choir is also revealed by its increasing use by the Burgundian Court chapel choir as a feeder institution. Before 1450, the Burgundian court chapel choir had tended to recruit singers formerly employed by the Count of Flanders and the papal chapel, as well as from Paris and from cathedral schools in northern France. The more successful of these singers were then sometimes rewarded with prebends at St. Donatian's. But later in the century, from around 1460, St. Donatian's began to be a supplier of court singers. As Hendrik Callewier summarizes, "in 1470, no less than eight members of the chapel, out of a total number of twenty-nine, had previously sung in the church of St. Donatian. Under Charles the Bold, the percentage of "Bruges singers" in the court chapel continuously hovered around twenty to twenty-five per cent."[32]

In these aspects of training and recruitment there is a further alignment with Edward's subsequent choir reforms at Windsor, where from 1475 onwards there are signs of an increased consideration for and investment in the recruitment and training of choir members. A major change was the appointment at Michaelmas in 1477 of a Supervisor of the Choristers.[33] The

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[30] Ibid., 121–2.

[31] Callewier, "The Singers of the Bruges Churches," 216.

[32] Ibid., 217.

[33] Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 203.

creation of this position, whose holder assumed all practical responsibilities relating to the choristers, allowed the Instructor of the Choristers to concentrate entirely on music. Documentation of the training the choristers received survives on the wall of what was the choristers' schoolroom at Windsor – a painted teaching aid from 1480. The notes on the five-line staff appear to have been intended to help the choristers learn features of mensural notation, because they include some of the more complex combinations of note values.[34]

Recruitment, too, became a major concern at Windsor. Edward issued its chapter a license, almost certainly without precedent, to recruit choirboys who had received their early training elsewhere.[35] There are also records of choir men being recruited to Windsor from as far away as Salisbury and Arundel, which suggests a search radius even larger than that of St. Donatian's choir.[36] And Windsor also became a feeder choir for the Chapel Royal: William Edmunds, for example, was a clerk (1477) and Master of the Choristers (1479) at St. George's, before becoming a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal.[37] This practice of vigorous and thorough recruiting was also taken up by Richard on becoming king: in September 1484 he gave a commission to one of the gentlemen of the Chapel Royal "to take and seize for the King all singing men and children expert in the science of music, within all places of the realm, as well in cathedral churches, colleges, chapels, houses of religion, and all other franchised or exempt places, or elsewhere."[38]

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[34] Ibid., 204–5. Bowers provides photographs of the wall on 205.

[35] Ibid., 204.

[36] Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 204 and 201.

[37] Kisby, "The Early-Tudor Royal Household Chapel," 91–2.

[38] W. H. Grattan Flood, "New Light on Early Tudor Composers: XXVII. Gilbert Banaster," *The Musical Times* 64, no. 963 (1923): 319–20.

The Power of Professional Musicians

The leading musician among the *socii de musica* at St. Donatian's during Edward's time in Bruges was Gilles Joye. Joye was an example of a musician who had migrated from Courtrai, some forty miles to the south, where there had been a polyphonic tradition since at least 1438. As Joye was already ordained, an exception had to be made so that he could become a *clericus installatus* at St. Donatian's in 1448, as singers were not usually allowed to be priests.[39] Administrative documents from the 1450s are littered with references to Joye's crimes and misdemeanors: composing and singing ribald verses about his colleagues at a feast, vandalism in the city's streets, frequenting brothels, kidnapping women, refusing to carry out liturgical duties, and abusing his colleagues verbally and physically.[40] Joye could have been dismissed for any of these transgressions, but his musical skill was of such importance to the chapter that they kept him in his position.[41]

One of the attractions of singing at St. Donatian's was the chance to earn a good income: this was achieved both through the distributions (per-service payments for singing polyphony) and from the incomes and property from chantries and benefices.[42] Joye was certainly an example of a singer who achieved this, becoming wealthy enough to be able to commission Hans Memling to paint his portrait in 1472.[43] Having abandoned his position at St. Donatian's in 1453 in favor of becoming a benefice at Cleves, Joye used this career progress as leverage when negotiating a return to St. Donatian's. Joye received a new prebend at St. Donatian's in 1461 and

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[39] Callewier, "'What You Do on the Sly… Will Be Deemed Forgiven," 91.

[40] Ibid., 93–4.

[41] Ibid., 94–5.

[42] Callewier, "The Singers of the Bruges Churches," 216.

[43] Strohm, "Music, Ritual, and Painting," 42.

was then appointed a *clerc* in the Burgundian court chapel in 1462. When he had to withdraw from the duke's service in 1468, due to illness, Joye spent more time at St. Donatian's where he was given important administrative roles from 1468–71.[44] During this period Joye spent a record-breaking amount of the fabric's budget on the copying of polyphonic music. Some of the copies could have been Joye's own music; he was a renowned composer in his lifetime, and some of his compositions survive.[45] Strohm attributes the two masses in the Lucca Choirbook based on the song "O rosa bella" to Joye.[46] Callewier argues that Strohm's attribution is supported by the knowledge that a woman named Rosabella lived with Joye in the 1450s, a state of affairs that brought him into conflict with the St. Donatian's chapter.[47]

Polyphonic Repertoire at St. Donatian's

All of the polyphonic music books belonging to St. Donatian's appear to have been destroyed in the sixteenth century, so we are left to deduce what we can from account books and the endowments of the period. In 1468, the accounts describe the use of polyphony for the Magnificat for the first time, and we know that by this point there were eighteen such settings already in the church's choirbooks.[48] From 1468 to 1471 the accounts also document the fruits of Joye's interest in polyphonic music: the copying of thirty-three mass settings. These were carried out by the scribe Martinus Colins,[49] who with four other singers had in 1468 threatened to leave for a new position in the service of the bishop of Liège, whose city had burned to the ground

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[44] Callewier, "'What You Do on the Sly… Will Be Deemed Forgiven," 97.

[45] Ibid., 104.

[46] Strohm, *The Rise of European Music*, 125–6 and 260–1.

[47] Callewier, "'What You Do on the Sly… Will Be Deemed Forgiven," 95.

[48] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 29.

[49] Ibid., 30.

twice by the Burgundians in the past three years but had begun a period of recovery. The other singers were replaced, but Colins was persuaded to stay with a substantial increase in his salary, demonstrating his value to the chapter.[50]

Edward's Opportunities to Hear the St. Donatian's Choir

Edward's opportunities to hear the choir of St. Donatians's would have included the frequent feast days for which, by 1470, music was prescribed as part of the church's celebrations. For example, from the end of the fourteenth century onwards there were polyphonic masses for Saints Donatian (October 14), Leonard (November 6), and Machut (November 15) sung at St. Donatian's Church.[51] Edward may still have been in the Hague on these dates, but there were also feasts with significant endowments while the king was most likely in Bruges such as those for St. Anthony the Great (January 17) and the Feast of the Purification (February 2). The king would have had other opportunities to hear the *socii de musica* of St. Donatian's, as its members were in demand not only in the liturgy at their home church, but in polyphonic performance in a variety of other contexts across the city. By 1470 their regular engagements to sing polyphonic masses included those at Our Lady's Collegiate Church, the churches of St. Walburga and St. James, and the Augustinian Abbey "ten Eeckhout."

Conclusion

As Strohm puts it, in the fifteenth century Bruges and the Low Countries "fostered a vigorous musical practice second to none at the time."[52] Towards the end of this period, St. Donatian's

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[50] Ibid., 27.

[51] Brown, *Civic Ceremony and Religion*, 105.

[52] Strohm, *Music in Late Medieval Bruges*, 31.

choir seems to have been one of the region's leading polyphonic ensembles, and therefore arguably one of the finest in Europe. There are numerous contributory factors to its success: the forward-thinking design of its endowment for choirboys, its arrangements for recruitment and training of singers, its offer of lucrative careers both in Bruges and beyond. That the choir was highly regarded is borne out by the demand for its singers in Flanders and further afield. Just as the years before 1470 saw an intensification of the musical activity in Charles' the Bold's chapel, a similar trend can be observed at St. Donatian's. Here it is the large outlay on the copying of polyphonic music ordered by Gilles Joye that suggests a peak in musical activity, just in time for Edward's stay in Bruges.

So ubiquitous were the *socii* of St. Donatian's in the musical scene of late-fifteenth-century Bruges that it is hard to imagine how Edward and Richard could have avoided them during their stay. There are hints in Edward's arrangements at St. George's Windsor that he was aware of their singing from hearing them in person or by reputation, given that he would soon increase the number of singers in his own premier choir to replicate almost exactly the numbers of choristers and clerks at St. Donatian's, together with his introduction of a similarly rigorous approach to training and recruitment. With St. Donatian's choir having almost fifty years of experience singing polyphony and a status outmatching any comparable English choir before 1472, it is easy to see why it should have been an apt model.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

In the preceding chapters I have presented evidence that supports four central findings. The first is that Edward IV's exile in Burgundian territory coincided with a highpoint in musical activity both at the ducal court and in Bruges, which were locations visited by the king. In both places he would have been able to witness some of the leading European exponents of polyphonic music. The second is that there are numerous apparent connections between the organization of the leading choirs in Burgundian territory and the subsequent reforms of English ensembles. The most influential ensembles appear have been the choir of St. Donatian's in Bruges and the ducal chapel choir. The third finding is that there is evidence both in England and Burgundian territory of a trend of choirboys being established in groups of six in the period from 1450 to 1490, especially in situations where their role involved polyphony. And finally, Edward and Louis de Gruuthuse's oratories, built in the 1470s, seem to be at the center of a wider late-medieval trend of the construction of such spaces by Anglo-Burgundian music patrons.

An Influential Polyphonic Tradition

The timing of Edward's exile was serendipitous, not simply in terms of its coincidence with Gruuthuse's oratory, but also with the flurry of activity related directly to polyphonic performance. I have presented numerous signifiers of this, but three stand out: one in performance practice, one in ensemble design and one in the expansion of repertoire. First is the *Salve* or *lof* tradition of devotional concerts which had started in 1468 at Our Lady's Collegiate Church. These were sung by the succentor and the boys after vespers on all Sundays and Marian feasts with organ and two or three extra singers from the *socii de musica* of St. Donatian's Church. The second is Charles the Bold's preoccupation with enlarging and organizing his choir

in the years 1467–70, including his 1469 ordinance with its instructions on the requirements for performing polyphony. And the third is the unprecedented spending on the copying of polyphonic music at St. Donatian's Church in the years 1468–71 under the musician and administrator Gilles Joye.

St. Donatian's Church in Bruges, which had thirteen choristers and around twelve singing men by 1470, could arguably have been the model for Edward's choral reforms at Windsor, as much as any homegrown ensemble. And the opportunities Edward would have had during his exile to hear this choir sing at Lady mass or at feasts suggest one way in which the performance practice and organizational design of this leading European choir could have been transmitted to English musical culture. Considering that the king was not present at the meeting where he became a Knight of the Golden Fleece in 1468 nor at his sister's Bruges wedding celebrations in in the same year, Edward's winter in Burgundian territory would have been his principal chance to experience the music of Bruges and the Burgundian court, the finest of its kind in northern Europe, in person.

Choir Reforms

The features of the Burgundian choirs which seem to have been adopted later by English ensembles include large polyphonic groups of sixteen or more singers, an increased prevalence of boys being trained to sing polyphony, and an emphasis on the recruitment of both boys and men. All three of these traits are discernible in the choir of St. Donatian's in Bruges by the mid-fifteenth century, and thereafter became part of the operations of the choir at St. George's Windsor, which Edward modernized from 1477 to 1482. Evidence of similar developments can be seen in a number of other English choirs of the period, such as those of the Chapel Royal,

Lady Chapel choirs at Winchester and Westminster, and two new foundations, Middleham and Barnard Castle, established by Richard Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother, who had joined him in exile.[53]

Six-Chorister Groups

In the Burgundian realm, the groups of choirboys established to sing polyphony in the 1420s, such as those at St. Donatian's in Bruges, St. Peter's Collegiate Church in Lille, and the Sainte-Chappelle in Dijon, had four places for choristers. But from the middle of the century a trend emerged towards groups of six, established at Tournai Cathedral (1450), St. Gudula's Brussels (1466), Sts. Guido and Peter in Anderlecht (both 1481), and St. Donatian's in Bruges, which was confirmed in 1484 after a delay of over a decade. I argue that this Burgundian trend is reflected in the prescription in Charles the Bold's ordinance of 1469 for six "hautes voix" when performing polyphony.

In the years after Edward's exile, examples of this six-chorister grouping can also be found in England. A possible explanation for this is that the king and his entourage experienced this phenomenon in Burgundy and co-opted it for their own choirs. For example, Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, was responsible for foundations specifying six choristers at Middleham in 1478, where the statutes specify polyphonic duties, and at Barnard Castle in the same year, although this latter example did not come to fruition. In England, there are also examples of

[53] Roger Bowers, "To Chorus from Quartet: The Performing Resource for English Church Polyphony, c. 1390–1559," in *English Choral Practice, 1400–1650*, ed. John Morehen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 31; Bowers, "Choral Institutions," 6031; Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 199–200.

choirs being reformed with six boy choristers such as the Lady Chapel choirs of Worcester Cathedral in 1479 and Westminster Abbey in 1480, and of Jesus College Rotherham in 1483.

Anglo-Burgundian Music Patrons as Oratory Builders

This study is focused principally on Edward's exile in Bruges, but I argue that connections between the upper-level oratories built by Edward and his host Gruuthuse are part of a wider network of related examples in England and Burgundy. Firstly, there seems to have been an intense period of oratory building in Flanders from the 1450s to the 1470s, with examples built by the Burgundian dukes at the Rihour Palace in Lille and the Prince's Palace in Bruges, as well as Gruuthuse's model at Our Lady's Collegiate Church in Bruges.[54] I argue that not only did this tradition influence Edward's decision to include an oratory in his new church at Windsor in the 1470s, but that the function of this feature of church design was imitated elsewhere in England in subsequent decades by patrons who had connections to the king or to Windsor. Examples of this can be found in the oratory overlooking the chapel of Christ's College in Cambridge, which was built for Margaret Beaufort, and that constructed by Bishop Edmund Audley with a view of the Lady Chapel at Hereford Cathedral.[55] My argument for the function of these constructions being related to music is based on the evidence that their creators, in England and the Burgundian territory, were all involved in the increase and improvement of resources for choral performance during this period.

[54] Maekelberg and De Jonge, "The Prince's Court at Bruges," 9; Nuechterlein, "The Domesticity of Sacred Space," 69.

[55] Oakes, "In Pursuit of Heaven," 206; Pevsner, Cambridgeshire, 50.

Main Outcome and Implications for Future Research

Historians have sometimes explained the rise of polyphonic choral music in England as an insular phenomenon which evolved from the singing of Lady mass in the Lady Chapel into a fuller choral tradition at the end of the fifteenth century.[56] However, the reforms to significant English choirs at Westminster Abbey, Worcester Priory, Winchester Priory, York Minster, and Bristol Abbey that took place from 1472 to 1486 suggest a revolution more than an evolution.[57] The importance of Edward's reformed choir at Windsor, which by 1482 was made up of thirteen choristers and thirteen lay clerks is undisputed, and Bowers describes these developments as "the seed-corn of the English choral tradition."[58] My argument is that this seed of the English choral tradition was one imported over the sea from Burgundian territory by Edward and his courtiers, in the same way that they brought in physical goods and intellectual property via the same trade route.

Two parts of my thesis have implications for future research. Firstly, the phenomenon I have identified of the six-choirboy team in polyphonic choirs is worthy of further study as an aspect of emergent performance practice in the late-fifteenth century. While there was a group of this size Windsor that predates those discussed above, there is no indication that this ensemble sang anything beyond chant and improvised discant.[59] Therefore, it would be worthwhile to cross-reference all of the ensembles above with what is known about their polyphonic repertory in these years, and to look for connections between the design of these boy chorister cohorts and their musical function.

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[56] One example of this is: Tim Tatton-Brown, "How Lady Chapels Gave Birth to Cathedral Choirs," *The Church Times*, April 29, 2016.

[57] Bowers, "To Chorus from Quartet," 31.

[58] Bowers, "The Music and Musical Establishment of St. George's Chapel," 202.

[59] Ibid., 194.

Secondly, I propose that the similarities in design and function between Gruuthuse and Edward's oratories, and the fact that they were installed during a period of choral growth, imply that such oratories would be appropriate for case studies of the relationship between singers and listeners in the decades around 1500. These could be part of a wider exploration of the polyphonic choirs, patrons and oratories in this period, in the mold of the experimental work of Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti on sound and space in Renaissance Venice.[60]

A study of choirs, patrons and oratories should consider which listener was of greatest importance, as Howard and Moretti's work has often done. This approach has produced excellent results. Howard and Moretti have examined the musical consequences of the move, in around 1530, of the liturgical position of Doge Gritti from a position in the center of the basilica of St. Mark's to one in the chancel. They explored the consequences of this for music and musicians, using the methods of "sonic archeology": archival work combined with musical experiments and acoustical measurements. Through this work they have identified a link to the increased use of antiphonal choir galleries in the chancel in the years after the doge's change of location.[61] A similar study of oratories, choir and listeners in England and the Burgundian Low Countries around 1500 using the same methods would surely yield interesting results.

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[60] Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti, *Sound and Space in Renaissance Venice: Architecture, Music, Acoustics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[61] Howard and Moretti, *Sound and Space*, 33–6.

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